# Rockland Public Schools

Targeted District Review Report

February 2024

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

135 Santilli Highway

Everett, MA 02149

781-338-3000

[www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)

American Institutes for Research

Education Systems and Policy

201 Jones Road, Suite 100  
Waltham, MA 02451

202-403-5000

[www.air.org](http://www.air.org)

dese logo

American Institutes for Research Logo



Contents

[Executive Summary 1](#_Toc168488418)

[Rockland Public Schools: District Review Overview 4](#_Toc168488419)

[Curriculum and Instruction 10](#_Toc168488420)

[Assessment 18](#_Toc168488421)

[Student Support 24](#_Toc168488422)

[Appendix A. Summary of Site Visit Activities A–1](#_Toc168488423)

[Appendix B. Districtwide Instructional Observation Report B–1](#_Toc168488424)

[Appendix C. Resources to Support Implementation of DESE’s District Standards and Indicators C–1](#_Toc168488425)

[Appendix D. Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures D–1](#_Toc168488426)

[Appendix E. Rockland Public Schools: Student Performance Data E–1](#_Toc168488427)

This document was prepared by the American Institutes for Research, in collaboration with the  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Russell D. Johnston

Acting Commissioner

Published June 2024

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, an affirmative action employer, is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Inquiries regarding the Department’s compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the Human Resources Director, 135 Santilli Highway, Everett, MA 02149. Phone: 781-338-6105.

© 2024 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

*Permission is hereby granted to copy any or all parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes. Please credit the “Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.”*

This document printed on recycled paper.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

135 Santilli Highway, Everett MA 02149

Phone: 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370

[www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)

## 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 targeted review of Rockland Public Schools (hereafter, RPS) in February 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 three of the six standards (and related indicators) that DESE has identified as being important components of district effectiveness.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Three observers, who focused primarily on instruction in the classroom, visited RPS during the week of February 26, 2024. The observers conducted 68 observations in a sample of classrooms across grade levels, focused on literacy, English language arts (ELA), and mathematics. 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 classroom organization, mixed evidence of emotional support and student engagement (Grades 4-5), and limited evidence of rigorous instructional support. For both the 6-8 grade band and the 9-12 grade bands, instructional observations provide generally evidence of strong classroom organization, generally mixed evidence of emotional support, student engagement, and rigorous instructional support.

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

RPS strives to ensure equitable, inclusive, and effective instruction for all students. The district’s well-documented and regularly reviewed curriculum process ensures that a diverse group of stakeholders contributes to evidence-based curricular decisions that support all learners. Interviews with district leaders, school leaders, and teachers consistently underscored the district’s commitment to differentiated instruction, particularly for English learners (ELs) and students with disabilities. To enhance accessibility and ensure horizontal alignment of teaching practices, the district provides various tools and curricular supports. The district also has multiple initiatives and aligned professional learning opportunities to support all students in developing their social-emotional learning competencies.

RPS demonstrates several strengths in curriculum and instruction. These include conducting regular and rigorous curriculum reviews that incorporate teacher perspectives into decision-making. Additionally, RPS ensures that all teachers have access to curricular resources and supporting documents, which helps maintain consistent implementation of the curriculum across classrooms. Furthermore, RPS provides teacher support for differentiating instruction and utilizes professional learning to enhance social-emotional learning competencies. Lastly, the district offers students a variety of advanced coursework options.

RPS also has several areas for growth related to curriculum and instruction, including selecting curricula rated by and identified as high-quality by either CURATE[[3]](#footnote-4) or EdReports, providing sufficient professional learning opportunities to support curricular implementation at the elementary level, ensuring that staff share a common understanding and vision of rigorous instruction, conducting frequent classroom observations and providing targeted feedback to support effective instructional practices, and ensuring equitable access for all students to the various learning opportunities available within the district.

### [Assessment](#_Assessment)

RPS district and school leaders have established and support a culture that values the use of data in improving teaching, learning, and decision making. District documents and accounts by district leaders, school leaders, and teachers demonstrated that educators have access to a variety of data to inform their classroom instruction, including i-Ready, Bridges, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and district-developed common assessments. The district has systems for supporting data use, including district curriculum coaches who lead data meetings three times per year at the elementary level and provide protocols and templates for reviewing data at the middle and high school levels. As outlined in the *2022-2027 District Strategic Plan* and echoed in interviews with district and school leaders, the district is focusing on closing achievement, access, and opportunity gaps through its review of data.

RPS has several strengths related to assessment. The district uses a variety of assessments to determine needed interventions and monitor students’ academic progress; uses data to close achievement, access, and opportunity gaps and promote equity and inclusion; provides schools with structures, protocols, and templates to guide teachers’ daily use of data for determining instruction and interventions; and intentionally shares data with students to empower them to take ownership of their academic growth.

Areas of growth include identifying appropriate and accessible assessment tools for ELs; providing teachers with adequate time to review data and plan instructional changes and, at the middle and high schools, assistance to analyze and use data; and providing opportunities for proactive, two-way communication between high school teachers and families.

### [Student Support](#_Student_Support)

RPS demonstrates a commitment to ensuring a safe, equitable, and inclusive environment for all students, staff, and families. As articulated by its strategic plan, RPS has several initiatives aimed at fostering an inclusive climate and culture, including professional development on inclusive and trauma-informed practices and the establishment of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) teams at each school. Students, parents, and staff generally described school environments as safe, respectful, and inclusive, with efforts made to engage students with diverse experiences.

Several strengths demonstrate Rockland’s commitment to supporting its students, such as ensuring that each school has a DEI committee that focuses on improving the inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness of the school’s curriculum and general environment, which demonstrates a commitment to restorative and positive behavioral approaches that address the root causes of misbehavior. Student support teams (SSTs) at each school review a variety of data and integrate input from families to identify and assign supports. In addition, a variety of social-emotional learning interventions and supports are available to students, and the district has identified a need for improved two-way communication regarding student supports between schools and families, and recognition of the obligation to better meet the needs of ELs and students from low-income families.

Areas for growth regarding student supports include ensuring adequate staffing and resources within schools for translations; improving access to and the availability of guidance counselors and other Tier 1 social-emotional supports at the middle and high school levels; maintaining sufficient staffing levels to implement tiered interventions and supports, particularly for ELs; and promoting opportunities for families to contribute to planning and decision-making.

## Rockland Public Schools: District Review Overview

### Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, 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. The RPS review focused on only the three student-centered standards: Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support. 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 targeted 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 the implementation of DESE’s District Standards and Indicators, summarized in Appendix C.

### Site Visit

The site visit to RPS occurred during the week of February 26, 2024. The site visit included 11 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 60 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students, students’ families, and teachers’ association representatives. The review team conducted several teacher focus groups with 17 elementary school teachers, 11 middle school teachers, and 12 high school teachers; two focus groups with nine middle school and 10 high school students; and one family focus group with six parents.

The site team also conducted 68 observations of classroom instruction in four schools. Certified team members conducted instructional observations using the Teachstone CLASS protocol.

### District Profile

Rockland’s superintendent is Alan Cron, Ed.D., who was appointed in 2016; other district leaders include the assistant superintendent, the pupil personnel director, the data manager, the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and technology integration specialist, and principals from each district school. The school committee has five members who are elected for three-year terms.

In the 2023-2024 school year, there were 175.3 teachers in the district, with 2,140 students enrolled in the district’s four schools. Table 1 provides an overview of student enrollment by school.

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School | Type | Grades served | Enrollment |
| R. Stewart Esten Early Childhood Center | Preschool | PK-K | 226 |
| Phelps Elementary School | Elementary | 1-4 | 640 |
| John W. Rogers Middle School | Middle | 5-8 | 697 |
| Rockland High School | High | 9-12 | 577 |
| Total |  |  | 2,140 |

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

Between 2021 and 2024, overall student enrollment decreased by 39 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.

The total in-district per-pupil expenditure was greater than the median in-district per-pupil expenditure for K-12 districts of similar size. In fiscal year 2022, the total in-district per-pupil expenditure for RPS was $19,767, which is $811 more than the average in-district per-pupil expenditure in districts with similar demographics ($18,956) and $3,240 more than the average in-district per-pupil expenditures in districts of similar wealth ($16,527). In-district per pupil expenditures for RPS were $213 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 RPS. 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=02510000&orgtypecode=5).

#### Achievement

* In Grades 3-8 between 2022 and 2023, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next Generation Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)declined or remained the same for each student group with reportable data in ELA, and improved for each student group in mathematics, except Native American students.
  + ELA: for most student groups, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations declined by 1 to 9 percentage points (whereas the state improved between 0 and 2 percentage points for each student group). The exceptions were EL and former EL students, students with disabilities, and Multi-race, non-Hispanic/Latino students, whose scores remained the same.
  + Mathematics: for most student groups, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 2 to 22 percentage points (whereas the state improved between 0 and 2 percentage points for each student group). The one exception was Native American students, who remained at 55 percent (27 percentage points higher than their statewide peers).
* In Grade 10, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next Generation MCAS in ELA was below or equal to the state rate for each student group. In the 10th Grade, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations improved between 2022 and 2023 for each student group with reportable data, except for students with disabilities.
  + ELA: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was between 1 and 17 percentage points lower than their statewide peers, except for low-income students whose scores were equal to their statewide peers.
  + Mathematics: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 10 to 15 percentage points, except for students with disabilities, who declined by 13 percentage points.
* In science, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the 2023 Next Generation MCAS was equal to or below the state rate for each student group in Grades 5 and 8, and above the state rate for each student group with reportable data in Grade 10, except for EL and former EL students and students with disabilities (see below).
  + Grades 5 and 8: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 9 to 38 percent and was below the state rate by 2 to 17 percentage points and equal to the state rate for African American/Black students and students from low income families.
  + Grade 10: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 32 to 66 percent and was above the state rate by 8 to 18 percentage points.
* EL and former EL students in Grade 10 met or exceeded expectations on the Next Generation MCAS at lower rates than their statewide peers.
  + Science: 0 percent of students met or exceeded expectations, 13 percentage points lower than the state rate of 13 percent.
  + ELA: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 6 percent, 10 percentage points lower than the state rate of 16 percent.
  + Mathematics: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 11 percent, 3 percentage points lower than the state rate of 14 percent.
  + Science: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 0 percent, 13 percentage points lower than the state rate of 13 percent.
* Students with disabilities in Grade 10 met or exceeded expectations on the Next Generation MCAS at lower rates than their statewide peers.
  + ELA: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 5 percent, which is 17 percentage points lower than the state rate of 22 percent.
  + Mathematics: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 5 percent, which is 11 percentage points lower than the state rate of 16 percent.
  + Science: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 0 percent, which is 16 percentage points lower than the state rate of 16 percent.

#### Growth

* ELA student growth percentiles (SGPs)[[4]](#footnote-5) were low in 2023 for African American/Black students in Grades 3-8 and low for all students and high needs students in Grade 10.
* Math SGPs were typical in 2023 for each student group with reportable data in Grades 3-8 and Grade 10.

#### Other Indicators

* RPS’s 2022 four-year cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities was 61.8 percent, which is 16.2 percentage points lower than the state rate of 78.0 percent.
* Out-of-school suspensions in 2023 occurred at higher rates than the state for each student group with reportable data.
  + Multi-race, non-Hispanic/Latino students' out-of-school suspension rate was 14.5 percent, which is almost five times the state rate (3.0 percent).
  + White students' out-of-school suspension rate was 4.2 percent, which is more than two and half times the state rate of 1.6 percent.
* The percentage of ELs (11.8 percent) and students with disabilities (16.1 percent) completing advanced coursework in 2023 was below the state rate for both groups by 19.9 percentage points.

### Classroom Observations

Three observers, who focused primarily on instruction in the classroom, visited RPS during the week of February 26, 2023. The observers conducted 68 observations in a sample of classrooms across grade levels, focused on literacy, 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 RPS, 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 RPS is in Appendix B, and summary results are in Tables 17, 18, and 19 in this appendix.

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

* Emotional Support. Ratings were in the high end of the middle range for the K-5 grade band (5.5) and in the middle range for the 6-8 and 9-12 grade bands (4.6 and 4.2, respectively).
* Classroom Organization. Ratings were in high range for all grade bands (6.2 for K-5, 6.5 for 6-8, and 6.8 for 9-12).
* Instructional Support. Ratings were in the low range for K-5 (2.9) and in the low end of the middle range for the 6-8 and 9-12 grade bands (3.6 and 3.4, respectively).
* Student Engagement. For Grades 4 and up, where student engagement was measured as an independent domain, ratings were in the high end of the middle range for Grades 4-5 and 6-8 (5.8 and 5.3, respectively), and the middle range for Grades 9-12 (4.7).

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

## Curriculum and Instruction

RPS strives to ensure equitable, inclusive, and effective instruction for all students. Evidence of this goal is the district’s well-documented and regularly reviewed curriculum process, which ensures that a diverse group of stakeholders contributes to evidence-based curricular decisions that support all learners. Interviews with district leaders, school leaders, and teachers consistently underscored the district’s commitment to building teachers’ capacity to differentiate instruction, particularly for ELs and students with disabilities. To enhance accessibility and ensure horizontal alignment of teaching practices, the district provides various tools and curricular supports. The district also developed multiple initiatives and aligned professional learning opportunities to build teachers’ capacity to meet the growing social and emotional learning needs of students returning from the pandemic.

Interviews and classroom observation data indicate a need for additional professional learning opportunities and instructional monitoring to support high-quality instructional practices that lead to rigorous learning experiences. Likewise, although the district provides a diverse array of postsecondary learning opportunities, particularly at the high school, improving the accessibility of these opportunities remains an ongoing area of focus for the district.

Table 2 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in curriculum and instruction.

Table 2. 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 conducts regular and rigorous reviews of curricula that incorporate teacher perspectives into decision making. * The district ensures that all teachers have access to curricular resources and documentation to support the consistent implementation of curriculum across classrooms. | * Selecting curricula rated by and identified as high quality by either CURATE or EdReports * Providing sufficient professional learning opportunities to support curricular implementation at the elementary level |
| [Classroom instruction](#_Classroom_Instruction) | * The district prioritizes and provides support to teachers on differentiating instruction to meet the needs and readiness levels of all students. * Rockland has multiple initiatives and aligned professional learning opportunities related to developing social-emotional learning competencies across the district. | * Ensuring all teachers share a common understanding and vision of high quality, rigorous instruction to drive instructional improvement. * Increasing the frequency of classroom observations and providing feedback to support rigorous learning experiences |
| [Student access to coursework](#_Student_Access_to) | * Multiple courses that prepare students for postsecondary opportunities are available at the high school. | * Ensuring equitable access for all students to the various learning opportunities available within the district |

### Curriculum Selection and Use

A review of RPS’s curricula demonstrates that the district uses a combination of teacher-developed and published curricula. In Grades K-5, the mathematics curriculum (Bridges in Mathematics) partially meets expectations for CURATE and meets expectations on EdReports. The mathematics curriculum for Grades 6-8 (Big Ideas) also partially meets expectations for CURATE. For science, the district uses Mystery Science (not rated by CURATE or EdReports) for Grades K-4, Foss Science (not rated by CURATE; rated as does not meet expectations by EdReports) for Grade 5, and Lab Aids for Grades 6-8 (not rated by CURATE and rated as partially meets expectations by EdReports). In grade k-4, teachers use a variety of ELA and writing curricula that vary by grade level, including Heggerty Phonemic Awareness for Grades K-2 (not rated by either CURATE or EdReports), Fundations Phonics for Grades K-3 (rated as partially meets expectations by EdReports; not rated by CURATE), Framing Your Thoughts for Grades 1-4 (not rated by either CURATE or EdReports), the Collaborative Classroom’s Being a Reader/Writer for Grades 1-4 (rated as partially meets expectations by both CURATE and EdReports), and Empowering Writers for Grades 2-4 (not rated by either CURATE or EdReports). Teachers in grades 5-8 referenced being in the early implementation stages of using EB Academics Writing (not rated by CURATE or EdReports). Finally, a curriculum inventory in grades 9-12 indicates that the teacher-created curricula used for core courses follow the Massachusetts curricula frameworks standards but are not rated by either CURATE or EdReports. Selecting high-quality curricula based on CURATE or EdReports ratings at all schools is an area of growth.

Both district documents and accounts from district and school leaders described a regularly occurring and rigorous process for reviewing and selecting curricula. This process has three stages: (a) identifying curricula, (b) piloting curricula, and (c) adopting curricula. The individuals involved in the review process vary by level and include a team of teachers, curriculum coaches, and district leaders at the elementary level; “lead” teachers and assistant principals at the middle school level; and department heads at the high school level. Several stakeholders also referenced the existence of curricular committees that review and select specific curricula during the review process, providing an opportunity for teachers to contribute to school decision-making.

During the identification phase, the individuals involved in the review process gather information about available curricular resources and assess whether they align with the school’s goals and relevant state academic standards. District and school leaders specifically emphasized during the selection process the importance of incorporating the perspectives of teachers and other stakeholders into the review process and considering whether the curriculum would be accessible to all learners. As one district leader summarized,

[We’re] making sure that it’s equitable, [that it has] online components, English language learner components, so that it’s inclusive of all learners. Making sure that our teachers are involved in the selection process. So, [we have] a lot of teacher involvement in selection and working through the different curricula that we can choose from. We really do try and do all the best practices.

The piloting phase of the review process involves a small group of teachers within departments testing the curriculum in the classroom to evaluate their effectiveness. For example, teachers shared that English teachers at the middle school are currently piloting the EB curriculum and providing feedback to the review team through a Google form. The adoption phase will start if the curriculum is successful during the piloting phase. Both school leaders and teachers referenced the successful adoption of the Bridges in Mathematics curriculum that resulted from a curricular review process in 2018. Those individuals noted that reception to the Bridges in Mathematics curriculum was predominately positive, with both teachers and support specialists praising Bridges for filling in curricular gaps and helping with vertical alignment of mathematics learning between Esten, Phelps, and RMS.

RPS conducts formal reviews of its curriculum approximately every five years at the elementary and middle school, while at the high school, leaders reported using a rotational schedule in which different departments alternate each year to undergo a rigorous review. However, teachers across school levels described continually tweaking curriculum maps and ensuring alignment of all curricula to state standards. A report conducted by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) as part of the RHS’s accreditation process found that the high school departments were at various stages of completing the curricular review process, but “a significant amount of curriculum work has been accomplished.” Additional district documents and accounts from both district leaders and teachers demonstrate the RHS’s commitment to continually mapping, updating, and tweaking its curriculum. Departments at RHS will annually review their curricula and then meet throughout the year during early-release days for iterative improvements. Teachers and school leaders at the elementary, middle, and high school levels also referenced the district’s commitment to regular and rigorous curricular reviews. These reviews are a strength for the district.

Another strength of the district is its commitment to ensuring that all teachers have access to curricular resources and documents to support the consistent implementation of curricula across classrooms. Teachers across the elementary level expressed that due to the recent merger of three elementary schools into the Phelps, aligning the implementation of curricula was an ongoing process. Teachers at the middle and high school levels generally agreed that teachers implemented curricula consistently across classrooms. District documents, teacher focus group participants, and the NEASC report affirm that all four district schools meticulously catalog all written curricula and pacing guides through a shared Google Drive folder. The templates for each curriculum include units of study, essential questions, learner outcomes, skills, instructional strategies, assessment practices, and resources. To ensure horizontal alignment of teaching across classrooms, teachers at Phelps reported meeting by grade level every planning period (about three times per week) to review what they will teach the following week for all subject areas. Likewise, teachers at RMS and RHS described similarly using their common planning time to ensure that subject-area teachers are pacing and administering the same assessments to ensure consistency across classrooms.

Though staff mentioned how the district provides sufficient resources, they reported that they had insufficient training to implement those resources and the curricula with fidelity. Supporting the fidelity of curricula implementation remains an area for growth. Although district leaders, teachers, and support specialists at the middle and high school levels expressed satisfaction with the professional learning opportunities available to them—highlighting, for instance, the option for teachers to pursue further learning through district-reimbursed graduate courses—those at the elementary level indicated that the professional learning provided did not adequately prepare them for implementing various curricula. Teachers in one focus group stated that the provision of professional development could be “vastly improved upon,” and those in another group expressed feeling “inundated” with new curricula without adequate learning opportunities to support them. One teacher cited the example of the Bridges in Mathematics curriculum, feeling that they and their colleagues could have benefitted from specialists from the curriculum program providing initial hands-on support.

I mean, just specifically looking at this math program, it’s our third year in like we haven’t [had PD] since the first year [or] had anybody from the program come to the school like, you know, you’re teaching 6-, 7-, 8-year-olds a lot of intricate concepts, and I just don’t feel like we’re supported enough with that, and I don’t know if it’s a blame game necessarily, but our biggest need is instructional practice for kids that young.

Likewise, both teachers and support specialists cited the challenge at Phelps of aligning differing curricular expectations after the merger of different schools. Teachers and support specialists reported expectations were still being figured out by administrators and teachers as to what program resources are “must use” versus which resources are optional to use. They further explained this sorting of resources is ongoing and requires additional professional development for some teachers who may not have previously utilized particular programs. For example, teachers described the Keys to Literacy training on the science of reading generally positively; however, they felt that newer teachers lacked that knowledge base which led to differing implementation of the reading curriculum. Ensuring sufficient professional learning and curricular support, particularly at the elementary level, is an area of growth for the district.

### Classroom Instruction

Data from CLASS observations, along with feedback from teachers and students, all point to the need for improved classroom instruction focused on fostering rigorous learning experiences—an area of growth for the district. District leaders and documents outlined a district priority on the science of reading and literacy instruction at the elementary levels. This priority includes a Literacy Plan detailing the role of ELA coaches in Grades K-4, supporting teachers in implementing “differentiated” practices and scaffolds to support learners with varying needs using Universal Design for Learning and common planning time dedicated to reviewing modules as part of the Keys to Literacy training. However, when asked about the presence of a clear instructional vision guiding their instructional practices, teachers expressed ambiguity. For example, teachers in one focus group explained that instructional expectations varied annually based on the “flavor of the year.” Similarly, teachers in another focus group expressed certainty regarding the existence of instructional expectations, but they were uncertain about the specifics.

Similarly, low to middle CLASS scores within the Instructional Support domain indicated opportunities for improvement in crafting learning experiences that challenge students and foster higher-order thinking skills and cognition. The district displayed low averages for Concept Development (2.3, Grade K–3), Analysis and Inquiry (2.2, Grades 4–12), and Quality of Feedback (2.3, Grades K–12). Differences of opinions surfaced in the interview data, with teachers and school leaders highlighting an emphasis on “authentic” and project-based learning experiences at the middle and high school levels, whereas students across two focus groups described more traditional learning approaches involving lectures, note taking, and worksheets. One notable exception was at Esten, at which both teachers and families praised the school for implementing play-based learning experiences that emphasized active student engagement.

School and district leaders described monitoring instruction by conducting evaluations, observations, and walkthroughs and leading discussions on best practices during team meetings and common planning time. One district leader admitted that walkthroughs have become less frequent since the COVID-19 pandemic, and several school leaders expressed wanting more opportunities to observe instruction and provide support on instructional practices. Additional efforts to monitor instructional practices include elementary teachers submitting their lesson plans to school leaders and instructional coaches weekly. Teachers across focus groups supported comments from district leaders, reporting that classroom observations occur infrequently. Teachers also expressed a desire for more guided feedback to enhance their instruction. Overall, fostering rigorous learning experiences through consistently observing instruction and providing targeted feedback to support effective instructional practice remains an area of growth for the district.

According to accounts by district leaders, teachers, support specialists, and families, the district provides supports to teachers that aid in differentiating their instruction and adjusting practice to account for differences in students’ learning needs and levels of readiness. Recognizing the need for instructional supports, particularly for the district’s growing population of newcomers and ELs, district leaders in one focus group described providing a suite of curricular tools, technology, and resources to teachers to assist them in adapting instruction. At the elementary school level, teachers and support specialists described the importance of the What I Need (WIN) block for differentiating instruction based on learning needs identified through assessments (see “Data Use” for more details). Likewise, teachers at the middle and high school levels described adapting their assessments and scaffolding rubrics to adjust to different students’ readiness levels. One support specialist provided the example of RHS’s English department using technology to make Shakespeare accessible to all learners. Similarly, a staff member at the middle school described teachers doing a “really great job” of modifying instruction for different learning needs:

Teachers do a really great job [of] balancing project-based learning versus assessments versus a lecture day versus a hands-on day. Guiding students, scaffolding it so that they can learn to do more independent work. I feel like the whole point of middle school is every kid learns differently and helping them find their strength so that they can access the curriculum where they’re at and still demonstrate progress.

Families also generally agreed that teachers understand and provide for their children’s learning needs. For instance, one family member commended their child’s school for offering hands-on support in the classroom and equipping them with the skills to effectively teach their child with a learning disability at home. Likewise, CLASS scores revealed district scores in the middle to high range for the teacher sensitivity dimension, which encompasses the teacher’s awareness of and responsiveness to students’ academic and emotional needs. The district’s emphasis on and support for differentiating and scaffolding instruction to account for students’ different learning needs and levels of readiness is a strength for the district.

Another notable strength of the district is its dedication to ensuring that students across all school levels develop social and emotional competencies. School leaders and teachers described the prioritization of addressing students’ social-emotional learning needs, leading to the adoption of initiatives such as Second Step, positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), and the Pyramid model. Esten’s strategic plan, along with district documents on professional development, details the specific provision of training and resources to facilitate the implementation of PBIS and Pyramid model practices. Similarly, elementary-level teachers and support specialists highlighted the integration of Second Step and other Tier 1 social-emotional learning supports into all classrooms. RMS’s strategic plan outlines training sessions on the Second Step curriculum and the introduction of executive functioning sessions and other social-emotional learning skills during bulldog advisory blocks that occur once every six days. Furthermore, all students at RHS participate in a Dog Block, or a once-a-month advisory-style block that provides opportunities for students and staff to build positive relationships. RHS’s professional development handbook demonstrates allocated time for staff to design a curriculum for the students’ Dog Block aligned with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning’s *Framework of Social and Emotional Learning*. These initiatives demonstrate the district’s commitment to fostering social and emotional competencies among students across all school levels.

### Student Access to Coursework

District documents and accounts from teachers, students, and families collectively affirm the district’s commitment to providing all students with access to a range of rigorous coursework and enrichment opportunities, particularly at the high school level. At RHS, district leaders, families, and students, in conjunction with the RHS *Program of Studies*, described a myriad of accelerated learning and enrichment offerings. These opportunities include approximately 15 Advanced Placement (AP) courses, honors classes across core subjects, and a wide spectrum of electives designed to prepare students for specific career trajectories. The Career and Technical Education Department offers electives aligned with career pathways, spanning business (e.g., Introduction to Business or Marketing), computer science, construction technology, and family and consumer science. Feedback from families and students resoundingly reflected their appreciation for the breadth of these elective offerings, with several students affirming how these courses helped them identify their career interests. One student noted how electives allowed them to explore different career paths, while another student similarly explained,

The wide variety of electives is really helpful. Going into college and picking majors is stressful, but we have a class for each different major [or] interests. So, I’ve taken marketing and art and cooking and then journalism. And I’m, like, “Oh, I like journalism. That’s what I want to do.” So, you can kind of experiment with different classes.

Similarly, accounts from district leaders and a review of documents demonstrate RHS’s provision of hands-on, authentic, and career-focused learning experiences—a strength for the district. The Department of Career and Technical Education received a $20,000 planning grant for the 2023-2024 school year to develop innovative learning pathways in manufacturing and business. Moreover, juniors and seniors have additional opportunities to pursue virtual learning, dual enrollment at Bridgewater State University or Massasoit Community College, and internships through RHS’s alternative learning program. Starting with the class of 2027, all RHS graduates will need to complete an electronic portfolio as a graduation requirement to demonstrate their proficiency in each Vision of the Graduate skills. The abundance of opportunities available at RHS for enrichment, elective courses, and postsecondary preparation is a strength for the district.

Opportunities for rigorous learning and elective courses similarly exist at the elementary and middle school levels. At RMS, students receive world language instruction and engage in quarterly enrichment activities like art and music. RMS teachers reported that the rotating “bulldog blocks” provide additional opportunities to provide targeted acceleration. Likewise, students in seventh and eighth grade, based on a recommendation from their teachers, can enroll in higher level mathematics courses. Despite these offerings, teachers and district leaders acknowledged that effectively implementing accelerating learning opportunities remains an area of growth. For example, teachers expressed a desire for professional learning opportunities to meet the needs of accelerated learners. At the elementary level, students partake in a rotating schedule of enrichment activities, such as STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics), art, music, and physical education, along with an afterschool drama program. District leaders and support specialists talked about the variety of opportunities during the WIN block for students to participate in accelerated project-based learning or move up to different grade levels for specific classes. Regular data analysis informs decisions regarding the WIN and bulldog block interventions at both schools, as outlined in the “Data Use” section.

Both family members and district leaders emphasized the accessibility of rigorous learning opportunities. For example, district leaders described efforts to improve the accessibility of AP classes, including reducing the AP test fees for low-income students and waiving academic requirements:

We encourage kids to override them. So, if a kid wanted to take AP Psychology and didn’t have an 80, they can go if . . . We don’t discourage kids from taking Advanced Placement because it’s this elitist group. We let anybody take it, and I think our scores reflect that.

Despite these efforts, district leaders acknowledged that disparities persist in advanced course enrollment, with disproportionate representation of female and White students. DESE’s 2023 district profile shows these inequities, revealing that among the 69 percent of 11th- and 12th-grade students enrolled in at least one advanced course, 75 percent are female, despite females constituting only 51 percent of the school population. Moreover, 78 percent of advanced coursework enrollees are White, whereas White students comprise only 68 percent of the overall population. RMS teachers also expressed a need for increased dialogue surrounding the equitable placement of students into leveled classes, suggesting that discussions or modifications about placements should occur in the middle of the year in addition to after the customary beginning-of-year assessments. Ensuring equitable access for all students to the various learning opportunities available is an area of growth for the district.

### DESE Recommendations

* *The district should implement its strong curricular review process to select high quality instructional materials, including those rated “meets expectations” by CURATE or EdReports, in all grades and across all subject areas.*
* *The district should provide ongoing professional development around the elementary curricula to support teachers in implementing it with integrity.*
* *The district should develop and disseminate a clear instructional vision for high-quality, rigorous instruction, and support educators in increasing their use of high-impact instructional practices so that students have consistent access to rigorous learning environments.*
* *The district should develop a system for observation and feedback that includes regular classroom observations and targeted feedback sessions that support teachers in implementing high-quality instruction.*
* *The district should address disparities in student access to advanced coursework by examining root causes and implementing changes to expand access.*

## Assessment

RPS district and school leaders have established and support a culture that values the use of data in improving teaching, learning, and decision making. District documents and accounts by district leaders, school leaders, and teachers demonstrated that educators have access to a variety of data to inform their classroom instruction, including i-Ready, Bridges, DIBELS, and district-developed common assessments. The district has systems for supporting data use, including district curriculum coaches who lead data meetings three times per year at the elementary level and provide protocols and templates for reviewing data at the middle and high school levels. As outlined in the *2022-2027 District Strategic Plan* and echoed in interviews with district and school leaders, the district is focusing on closing achievement, access, and opportunity gaps through its review of data.

Teachers have access to all student data through Forefront and receive a variety of protocols and tools to further support their analysis. The district shares data with families in various ways, including report cards, parent/caregiver conferences, and Aspen. The district also encourages sharing assessment data directly with students through data chats at the elementary and middle schools.

Table 3 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in assessment.

Table 3. 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 determine needed interventions and monitor students’ academic progress. | * Identifying appropriate and accessible assessment tools for ELs |
| [Data use](#_Data_Use) | * The district uses data to close achievement, access, and opportunity gaps and promote equity and inclusion. * The district provides schools with structures, protocols, and templates to guide teachers’ everyday use of data for determining instruction and interventions. | * Providing teachers with adequate time and, at the middle and high schools, assistance to use and analyze data |
| [Sharing results](#_Sharing_Results) | * The district intentionally shares data with students to empower them to take ownership of their academic growth. | * Providing opportunities for proactive, two-way communication between teachers at the high school and families, particularly those who may be more difficult to engage |

### Data and Assessment Systems

The district’s documentation and accounts from school leaders and staff confirm the use of various assessments across school and subject levels. At Esten, kindergarteners receive the Early Bird Assessment, a comprehensive early literacy screener, at the beginning, middle, and end of the year, along with the Bridges Benchmark Assessment for mathematics. At the elementary level (Grades 1-4), teachers administer the following benchmark assessments three times per year: (a) DIBELS for ELA; (b) the i‑Ready Diagnostic for both ELA and mathematics, and (c) the On-Demand Writing Unit Assessment for writing. Teachers for Grades 1 and 2 also screen students in mathematics using the Universal Screener for Number Sense. Finally, elementary students in Grades 1-3 receive the Wilson Fundations Unit Tests for ELA and in Grades 1-4 receive Bridges Unit tests for mathematics.

At RMS (Grades 5-8), teachers administer i-Ready three times per year for mathematics and reading, along with the B-SET several times per year for mathematics. In addition, both RMS and RHS administer teacher-developed common assessments for ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies twice per year for midterms and finals. Teachers at the middle and high school levels expressed satisfaction with their use of common assessments, with one teacher explaining how the flexibility of teacher-developed assessments enabled teachers to comprehensively evaluate student performance and refine assessments as needed:

With our common assessments of midyear and final exams, there is an opportunity immediately after for each teacher to fill out kind of an overall performance evaluation of how the students did, and it gives us as a department an opportunity to go back to our assessments and see if those assessments are really teaching the skills that we’re looking to get the students to adhere to. If there are questions on the assessment that we feel need to be adjusted, we always have that opportunity. If we feel that there are certain units or topics or whatever it might be that the students are not meeting proficiency in, it gives us an opportunity to department to reflect on that. So, with common assessments, there’s a lot of data evaluation.

Aligning with the objective outlined in RHS’s improvement plan of streamlining and revising assessments, the high school also purchased formative assessment tools, including Edulastic, Quizlet, and Grade Cam to assess students’ understanding on a more continual basis. Finally, a variety of stakeholders including a district leader, school leaders, and teachers reported that both RMS and RHS place a strong emphasis on standardized testing, including the MCAS, and at the high school, AP examinations, the PSAT, and the SAT. The use of multiple sources assessment systems, including teacher-created common assessments to determine interventions and monitor progress is a strength for the district.

Although the district has a multitude of assessments to collect student data, accounts by district leaders, school leaders, and support specialists highlighted the ongoing challenge of administering assessments to the district’s growing population of ELs. Across schools, ELs take Lexia and WIDA, with WIDA ACCESS used to determine and monitor targeted interventions. However, one support specialist explained that “we’re still working on how to progress monitor” multilingual learners, including exploring the adoption of new assessment tools, such as Flashlight Learning. Similarly, district leaders acknowledged the ongoing challenge of assessing the learning and social-emotional needs of multilingual learners. For instance, the rating scales for the third edition of the Behavior Assessment System for Children, which the district uses to measure students’ behavioral needs, require a staff member who can translate, leading to delays in identifying multilingual learners who need emotional or behavioral supports. Also, district and school leaders expressed concerns that students who are not native English speakers may be incorrectly identified as having a learning disability. Identifying appropriate and accessible assessment tools for multilingual learners remains an area of growth for the district.

### Data Use

As evidenced by district improvement documents and interviews with district leaders and teachers, RPS fosters a culture that promotes the regular use of data to guide instruction and decision-making processes. Both school leaders and teachers generally agreed that staff are “constantly using data” to inform their instructional practices and assess student learning needs and levels of readiness. Using the Forefront software, which stores and organizes assessment data, one district leader explained that teachers can easily view the “whole picture of the child.” Teachers similarly expressed appreciation for how Forefront organizes data by learning standard, which facilitates the quick identification of areas in which students may require extra support.

As outlined in its *2022-2027 District Strategic Plan*, RPS prioritized addressing and narrowing achievement gaps for students at risk in 2023-2024. The school improvement plans for the middle and high school levels build on that priority by focusing on analyzing MCAS and i-Ready data from the previous year to identify students who require remediation and to revise the curriculum more broadly to address achievement gaps. For example, teachers, school leaders, and district documents confirmed that school leaders compile standardized test data to identify trends, determine achievement gaps, and formulate appropriate action steps. Likewise, school leaders and staff similarly consider equity and inclusion when reviewing data at the lower levels. At Esten, a review of Early Bird data revealed that students with dyslexia were disproportionately ELs, which then prompted adjustments to support services. The use of data to close achievement, access, and opportunity gaps and promote equity and inclusion is a strength of the district.

Similarly, district documents and accounts from district and school leaders demonstrate another strength of the district: its support for guiding teachers in their daily use of data to inform instruction and interventions. At each school, a behavior support team meets regularly to review student conduct and attendance data, assign behavioral intervention plans, and monitor progress (See “Tiered Supports” section for more details). Similarly, to support students’ academic progress, students take benchmark assessments three times per year. Using the most recent benchmark assessment data, district curriculum coaches and academic interventionists lead data meetings with elementary teachers three times per year (during the fall, winter, and spring) to discuss student performance in ELA and mathematics. After reviewing the assessment data, teachers then design targeted interventions or enrichments based on those results. One teacher spoke positively about how this process has influenced both her assignment of interventions and general instructional practices:

It’s valuable information, at least I find it’s valuable information, because I can really look at the children and see where they’re weak in and what I need to do in my classroom or whether they need extra help in a WIN block.

To further support data use, instructional coaches provide elementary teachers with a map of assessments by subject area. Finally, teachers at the lower levels have additional opportunities to review data and receive guidance about needed interventions during their grade-level professional learning communities, which occur weekly at Esten and monthly at Phelps.

At RMS and RHS, teachers regularly review data during department-level meetings and common planning time, according to district documents and accounts from school leaders and teachers. At the beginning of the year, teachers receive guided protocols on conducting item-level analysis of standardized test data (such as MCAS) and making necessary adjustments. At RHS, teachers have dedicated time twice per year to collaboratively analyze common assessment data and receive support with an accompanying form that asks teachers to reflect on individual students’ performances and the curriculum more generally. The provision of structures, protocols, and templates to guide the use of data for determining instruction and interventions is a strength of the district.

In terms of professional development and training to support data usage, both school leaders and teachers reported participating in assessment-specific training. This training included comprehensive sessions on using i-Ready, facilitated by a specialist from Curriculum Associates, along with training on Early Bird, Lexia, and IXL when the district adopted those tools. Furthermore, RHS’s handbook on professional development reveals additional opportunities to focus on assessments, such as a workshop focused on applying artificial intelligence for designing inclusive and effective assessments.

Although opportunities and supports for data usage exist, teachers expressed concerns about the limited time for collaboration, which often leads to the responsibility of analyzing individual student data during their own instructional planning time. For instance, elementary teachers mentioned that the brevity of professional learning communities restricts their ability to thoroughly examine individual student data. Similarly, teachers in another focus group voiced frustration over the scarcity of opportunities in the upper levels to collaborate on data analysis, as well as the absence of support from a coach or a data specialist. One teacher highlighted how these time constraints negatively impact instruction quality:

I think that we lack a data expert that sits there [and] works with the data and provides us with results and ways to look at it and how we can actually use [it]. A lot of times we’re given raw data, especially with like the MCAS tests, and I feel like it takes a lot of time to even look at that, see who it belongs to, what class were they in, you know, where did they struggle and then even use our district diagnostics to compare that information to see if it will align [and] should we keep using this diagnostic? I think all of that hinders our ability to do things like the innovative or more collaborative because we’re crunching data.

Providing teachers with adequate time and, at the middle and high school levels, assistance to analyze and use data is an area of growth for the district.

### Sharing Results

The district promptly and consistently shares assessment results with teachers, families, and students. Teachers, school leaders, and support specialists consistently reported having no difficulties accessing their students’ data. Through Forefront, as explained in “Data Use,” teachers have access to all standardized test data associated with a specific student, organized by standard for easy analysis. Likewise, middle and high school teachers reported receiving prior years’ MCAS and other standardized test data from the district at the beginning of each school year. School leaders and the superintendent also share relevant data with the school committee, such as presenting AP scores and passing rates at the start of the academic year.

Although the frequency of receiving student data varies among schools, families shared a general feeling of being well informed about their children’s academic progress. At Esten, families receive progress reports twice per year (in January and June) and have additional opportunities for discussion during parent-teacher conferences and through ClassDojo. Families also receive notification of their children’s DIBELS assessment results if their children receive an underperforming flag. Likewise, Phelps issues report cards and shares i-Ready scores with families three times per year. Families also can communicate directly with teachers through email or ClassDojo.

District documents indicate that RMS distributes i-Ready scores to families three times annually before parent-teacher conferences, during which families can review and discuss the scores with teachers. Both middle and high school families also receive the prior year’s MCAS scores at the start of the school year and quarterly report cards. Access to report cards, progress reports, and grades remains easy and consistent through the Aspen portal, which teachers update every 10 days according to district documents and accounts from school leaders and families.

Accounts by teachers and families highlighted the need for proactive, two-way communication regarding their student’s progress, particularly at the high school level. With the open gradebook accessible through Aspen, middle school teachers described often receiving proactive communication from parents regarding specific students’ grades. In contrast, such communication is less prevalent at the high school level, where parental engagement tends to be lower, as evidenced by the teacher-reported decrease in parent-teacher conference attendance. Teachers in one focus group emphasized the need for teachers at the high school to foster two-way communication with families, especially when they notice students experiencing academic challenges or absenteeism. Similarly, a parent in a focus group mentioned that despite consistent updates to Aspen at the high school, parents “don’t really hear about if assignments [are] missing or somebody’s falling behind until it’s kind of after the fact, and [then] there’s not a lot you could do about it.” Addressing the need for proactive, two-way communication between teachers and families, particularly at the high school level, is an area of growth for the district.

According to accounts from school leaders, teachers, and support specialists, the district regularly provides students with access to their performance data to inform their personal growth and engagement. The elementary and middle schools have initiated direct sharing of i-Ready data with students through interactive data chats between teachers and students. Teachers expressed overwhelmingly positive feedback on these data chats, and a school leader similarly noted instances of students proudly discussing and taking ownership of their growth:

I like to hear kids come up to me in the cafeteria and say, “Hey, I grew. I showed 40 percent student growth.” I mean, that is tremendous to hear [a] seventh grader bragging about their student growth. . . . So, we are seeing more and more of that. There’s definitely buy-in in certain areas where kids like the data chats; they like being responsible for their own growth.

Similarly, students at RMS and RHS have access to grades and assignments through Google Classroom and Aspen, which enables them to decide what to focus on during intervention block periods. A parent emphasized the positive impact of Aspen, stating, “It has been a saving grace for one of my children in keeping them in line.” A review of district documents revealed that RMS provides reflection worksheets that prompt students to review their grades, identify and address missing or challenging assignments, and write appropriate action plans to support their academic success. The district’s intentional sharing of data with students to empower them to take ownership of their academic growth represents a strength for the district.

### DESE Recommendations

* *The district should refine and reconsider its assessment tools for ELs.*
  + *The district may consider utilizing DESE’s* [*ELE guidance document*](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.doe.mass.edu%2Fele%2Fguidance%2Fservices-programming.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) *(see page 32 for monitoring progress) or DESE’s* [*ESL Curriculum Modules*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/rlo/ele/esl-curriculum-modules/index.html#/) *(particularly Module 5: Setting Student Outcomes and Module 7: Assessing English Language Acquisition Effectively).*
* *The district should review existing supports for data analysis at the middle and high school levels and consider scheduling additional time for educators to collaborate around data analysis and instructional change.*
* *The district should develop systems to promote greater two-way communication between high school teachers and families.*

## Student Support

RPS demonstrates a commitment to ensuring a safe, equitable, and inclusive environment for all students, staff, and families. As articulated by the *2022-2027 District Strategic Plan*, RPS has several initiatives aimed at fostering an inclusive climate and culture, including professional development on inclusive and trauma-informed practices and the establishment of DEI teams at each school. Students, parents, and staff generally described school environments as safe, respectful, and inclusive, with efforts made to engage students with diverse experiences.

RPS adheres to a multitiered system of support (MTSS) framework, which includes clear systems and protocols for engaging students and families in the tiered support system. Each school has its own SST, which regularly reviews data to assign students to the multiple tiered supports available. In response to the district’s influx of ELs and their families, the district hired new staff, established programs, and forged partnerships to provide this population with comprehensive wraparound services, though challenges in translations and service delivery persist.

Table 4 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in student support.

Table 4. 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) | * Each school has a DEI committee that focuses on improving the inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness of the school’s curriculum and general environment. * The district demonstrates a commitment to restorative and positive behavioral approaches that address the root causes of misbehavior. | * Ensuring adequate staffing and resources within schools for translations |
| [Tiered systems of support](#_Tiered_Systems_of) | * Each school has an SST that reviews a variety of data and integrates input from families to identify and assign supports. * RPS offers a variety of academic and social-emotional interventions and supports. | * Improving access to and the availability of guidance counselors and other Tier 1 social-emotional supports at the middle and high school levels * Ensuring appropriate staffing levels are maintained to implement tiered interventions and supports, particularly for ELs |
| [Family, student, and community engagement and partnerships](#_Family,_Student,_and) | * RPS recognizes the need for improved two-way communication between schools and families. * RPS demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of its ELs and students from low-income families. | * Promoting opportunities for families to contribute to planning and decision making |

### Safe and Supportive School Climate and Culture

As confirmed by district documents and accounts by teachers and students, the district is pursuing multiple initiatives aimed at improving the inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness of the school’s curriculum and general environment—a strength for the district. The *2022-2027 District Strategic Plan* outlines several initiatives designed to promote policies and practices that foster an inclusive climate and culture. These initiatives include the creation of student and staff recognition programs, the provision of professional development and training on inclusive and antibias practices, and the establishment of district and building-level DEI teams. A review of district documents regarding professional development opportunities and school team meetings confirms that training is available, and DEI teams are actively working to enhance school climates and cultures. Both district documents and reports from teachers and support specialists indicate that district staff undergo yearly ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) safety training, along with additional training on trauma-informed practices for behavioral management and the provision of emotional support. Feedback from school leaders, teachers, and specialists confirms that additional training opportunities on equity and inclusion are available, such as a safety training session offered to the high school during the 2022-2023 school year focusing on LGBTQ+ students.

District documents also outline specific efforts to improve climate and student voice, including the establishment of various student groups at each level to provide opportunities for youth leadership. At the elementary level, Phelps has a Grade 4 student council that meets weekly with the principal to provide for student voice and leadership. School documents indicate the newly formed school intends to use the PBIS school climate suite to assess student, family, and staff perceptions of school climate. At RMS, school documents indicated the school’s focus on curricular and club offerings to ensure that students receive appropriate supports and are valued members of the school community. However, RMS documentation did not indicate if the survey identifies student or family perceptions of the school’s climate and culture. The district surveys teachers, students, and families at the high school level to assess perceptions of the school environment. Likewise, feedback from students, teachers, and specialists overwhelmingly portrayed school environments as safe, welcoming, respectful, and inclusive of students from diverse backgrounds and identities. This need is particularly evident with the recent influx of newcomer and refugee students and families. At RMS, for example, teachers and support specialists described a professional development session featuring a panel of ELs who discussed their experiences and preferences for instruction. An elementary-level staff member similarly expressed, “We really understand the importance of kids being here and making them feel part of the community,” and teachers and students at RHS referenced various efforts aimed at fostering a more welcoming school environment, such as displaying flags in the cafeteria representing students’ different countries of origin.

District documents and feedback from middle and high school teachers and students also highlight a prioritization of efforts to make the curricula more inclusive and reflective of students’ backgrounds and identities. Students reported instances of engaging with texts or lessons about different countries or cultures, and teachers described efforts to incorporate diverse authors and discuss topics relevant to students’ lived experiences. One teacher emphasized the importance of adjusting the history curriculum to better reflect the diverse student population:

With our larger, our growing EL population, especially our Portuguese-speaking students from Brazil, in the History Department, it’s become important for us to be more reflective and mindful about who’s within our classroom. And there are certain opportunities . . . that allow us to give those students an opportunity to participate based on their personal knowledge and their personal background [or] their family’s personal background. whether it’s going through, you know, a topic like imperialism, where you’re talking about revolutions or, you know, the Brazilian independence, those are chances for our students to be able to build those connections.

Although still in its early stages, a district leader mentioned the introduction of a curriculum bias form to assess the cultural responsiveness of curricular materials. The form is aimed at ensuring that adopted materials are free from bias or acknowledging and addressing any existing bias. Teachers fill out these forms for each subject area, and department heads are responsible for approval. Overall, the collaborative efforts of the district and school-level DEI committees and teachers to enhance the cultural responsiveness of the instructional and physical environments represent a significant strength for the district.

Aligned with these findings, analysis of CLASS data shows consistently high Positive Climate scores, with a district average of 6.9. Results from the Views of Climate and Learning student survey indicate a relatively strong school climate across all school levels and student subgroups, as evidenced by overall school climate scores in the “favorable” range (58, with a maximum score of 100). This cumulative score was generally consistent across racial, gender, and income groups, as well as for students with disabilities and ELs. There were some inconsistencies across age groups, however; the high school and middle school scored in the “somewhat favorable” range (43 and 39, respectively), whereas the elementary school scored in the 55-65 range.

Another strength for the district is its commitment to implementing positive behavioral approaches and interventions that address underlying causes of misbehavior, according to district documents and accounts from school staff and families. As outlined in district documents, RPS has implemented PBIS since 2016. School improvement plans for Esten, Phelps, and RMS outline initiatives related to PBIS, including providing professional development at the elementary level for Responsive Classrooms (a PBIS strategy) and enhancing PBIS practices at RMS by creating a PBIS committee. RHS annually reviews its student handbook, focusing in 2023-2024 on applying an equity lens and reducing exclusionary practices, according to district leaders and documents. Support staff and families expressed positive feedback regarding these behavioral approaches, particularly at the elementary level, with the integration of PBIS in social-emotional learning.

The district’s approach to attendance further emphasizes its commitment to positive behavioral approaches. One district leader referenced using a “social-emotional learning approach” starting in Grade 7 to address the root causes of students’ nonattendance. Similarly, a report by NEASC praised RHS’s approach to attendance:

The school is committed to continuing to improve attendance through a process that is supportive and compassionate and not punitive. The school reports that attendance has already improved and is continuing to explore strategies to enhance this effort. The school has begun using an app to text students and families with an invitation to Saturday school to ensure students know that they should access this resource. The administrative team and the student support team see improving attendance as an essential component of their work to improve students’ personal responsibility. Doing this in a way that emphasizes the caring nature of their effort and includes students in the development of recovery plans is likely to yield positive results as the efforts continue.

CLASS scores and accounts by students and parents show that behavioral expectations are generally well understood and reinforced through student handbooks and the actions of administrators, teachers, and students. For example, several groups at the middle school mentioned administrators holding grade-level meetings to discuss behavioral expectations, particularly as an issue arose. CLASS data included high marks for Behavior Management, with averages ranging from 6.2 for Grades 6-8 to 6.8 for Grades 9-12.

District and school staff generally agree that although the district has taken steps to address the growing number of ELs by hiring new personnel and contracting translation services, challenges persist regarding the language barrier, which impacts the overall school environment. Presently, the district relies heavily on a single district-level Portuguese speaker for translations and engages an external translation company for other language needs. However, numerous parents highlighted the absence of bilingual staff at elementary schools, which hinders the sense of inclusivity for families. Similarly, a middle school staff member acknowledged that relying on students for translations can be disruptive and admitted that improvements in the school’s capacity to translate for ELs is necessary. Ensuring adequate staffing and resources within schools for translations remains an area of growth for the district.

### Tiered Systems of Support

District documents and accounts from district leaders and support specialists demonstrate that each school employs an SST to review a variety of data and assign interventions as outlined by the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan and confirmed by interviews with district- and school-level staff. RPS adheres to an MTSS framework that guides the use of data support for the whole child. Aligned with that framework, each school’s SST meets regularly and usually consists of administrators, adjustment and/or guidance counselors, and additional support specialists depending on the school level (e.g., nurses and school psychologists, a school resource officer at the high school, instructional specialists, and coaches at the elementary schools). Although processes vary by school, they typically involve teachers identifying students who need support by completing a standardized SST referral form. From there, SST teams (or student intervention teams at RMS and RHS) will review student referrals and relevant student data, create an action plan with appropriate interventions and accommodations, and then re-review cases on a six-to-eight-week cycle to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan. The elementary schools also have additional behavioral teams (referred to as the CASE [Considerable, Accountable, Safe, Engaged] conference team at Esten and the behavioral support team at Phelps) that follow similar processes but focus only on behavioral and social-emotional needs.

Schools rely on a variety of academic and behavioral data to determine interventions. As referred to in the “Assessment” section of this report, teachers at Esten and Phelps meet three times per year to review benchmark i-Ready Diagnostic and DIBELS data to identify students’ learning needs and needed interventions. Esten also uses the Early Bird dyslexia screener, whereas RMS and RHS additionally review attendance, misconduct, and achievement data. SST teams will additionally ask behavioral specialists to conduct classroom observations, according to district leaders and documents. District and school-level support specialists further referenced efforts to involve parents in the SST process, such as inviting them to meetings, sending home benchmark results and reports on the need for interventions, and doing home visits in cases of severe student behavioral needs. The use of an SST process that involves a review of various data sources and collaborative decision making about needed interventions is a strength for the district.

Another strength for the district is the variety of academic and social-emotional learning supports that are available to students at all tiers and clearly outlined by the district’s District Curriculum Accommodation Plan and additional documents. At all schools, Tier 1 interventions offered include environmental and instructional accommodations available to all students and schoolwide social-emotional learning supports intended to both develop social-emotional competencies and support students accordingly. Likewise, students at all levels have opportunities to receive differentiated or supplementary instruction through WIN blocks at Esten and Phelps, bulldog blocks at RMS, and access to tutors and an afterschool support program at RHS.

As described in district documents, Tier 2 academic interventions across schools include small-group instruction for ELA and mathematics and a Saturday School at RMS and RHS, during which students can make up missed assignments, quizzes, and/or tests and receive additional instructional support from guidance counselors. Teachers and support specialists also mentioned “lunch bunches” and check-in/check-out behavior interventions as Tier 2 social-emotional learning supports. Finally, Tier 3 interventions include additional small-group interventions and referrals to alternative programs, depending on the needs identified. For example, Bridges Academy (Grades 7-12) provides a career-preparatory-focused learning environment for students at risk who would benefit from a smaller academic setting. The Student Alternative In-Learning program at RHS serves as an additional alternative learning and dropout prevention program, preparing students at risk academically, socially, and emotionally for career-based learning. Both programs use flexible learning models and provide opportunities for internships and work-based learning experiences.

With regard to social-emotional supports, parents and students highlighted the lack of access to and the availability of guidance counselors and other Tier 1 social-emotional support at the middle and high school levels. Although teachers, support specialists, and students generally confirmed the availability of both academic and nonacademic interventions and supports, parents and students raised concerns about the availability of Tier 1 support, particularly at the middle and high school levels. Several parents echoed that sentiment, expressing examples of either their child not being able to get in touch with a guidance counselor or having issues trusting them enough to confide in. One parent summarized a general lack of opportunities for middle schoolers to receive Tier 1 social-emotional learning supports and/or form relationships with adults:

In the current system, with the rotating schedule they only have homeroom once a week. It’s not enough to build any sense of trust or community. And I really think that just in like a general sense, in middle school, that that’s something that these kids are very often missing. And if they don’t have that kind of grounding, it’s just easy for things to go awry socially.

Improving access to and the availability of guidance counselors and general Tier 1 social-emotional support, particularly at the middle and high school levels, is an area of growth for the district.

As emphasized elsewhere in this report, the district has experienced an “exploding” population of newcomers and ELs, requiring the creation of new programming and supports to accommodate these learners. In response to these demographic shifts, district leaders reported that the number of EL staff in the district “has tripled,” and the district created a newcomers program in the elementary school, added several EL classrooms at the middle and high school levels, and generally uses a “push-in model” for ELs to receive additional supports alongside their classmates if needed. A Tiered Focus Monitoring Report conducted by DESE in 2023 found RPS largely in compliance with special education and civil rights statutes related to serving students with disabilities and ELs.

Although RPS has made various efforts to ensure sufficient staffing for ELs and students with disabilities, challenges remain. Notably, a lack of available staff creates challenges for the availability and implementation of academic and behavioral interventions, according to accounts by teachers, parents, and support specialists. District staff reported that shortages in the number of paraprofessionals and special educators interested and available to work at RPS has made hiring difficult. Likewise, teachers and support specialists at the elementary level reported that the lack of staff makes addressing the behavioral needs of students more difficult, particularly for students requiring Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Finally, both district leaders and support specialists described schools encountering challenges in delivering academic interventions to ELs and newcomers, with one staff member describing how students in the newcomer program may lack access to core instructional supports because of a lack of staff and scheduling challenges. Despite some progress in hiring, the ongoing need for additional support specialists and teachers to implement tiered interventions and support remains an area of growth within the district.

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

Rockland recognizes the importance of and has established opportunities toward engaging parents, families, and students in two-way communication and decision making, constituting a strength for the district. As outlined in the *District* *Strategic Plan* and echoed by various district leaders and school staff, family engagement has been a strategic focus for the district. Reflecting this focus, the RMS and RHS school improvement plans include specific objectives related to assessing and making improvements to family communication plans and increasing the number of community and family events offered. Staff across schools emphasized district and individual school expectations for teachers to initiate communication with parents. As one elementary staff member noted, “The expectation is that they [teachers] reach out to at least every family at least once” during the report card cycle. Similarly, a middle school staff member emphasized the school’s “open-door policy” with families, albeit acknowledging its varying effectiveness among families in the district.

Currently, the district and individual schools communicate with families through a variety of platforms, including emails; monthly newsletters; and applications such as Aspen, Remind, and Class Dojo. District leaders and school staff spoke very positively about using Class Dojo in the elementary school to facilitate two-way communication between parents and teachers. Class Dojo, along with monthly newsletters, is easily translatable into different languages, which has “bridged a lot of communication gaps and barriers with a lot of our multilingual learners” according to one staff member. The district also employs an EL liaison who conducts outreach to families of EL students. The district further ensures that communications are accessible to the district’s growing number of ELs by leveraging their school’s Portuguese-speaking translator and an additional company for non-Portuguese translations, although challenges with translations within schools remain (see “Safe and Supportive School Climate and Culture” section). Ultimately, parents largely agreed being well informed about general happenings in both their district and within their children’s schools.

District leaders and documents outlined various leadership opportunities for parents and families, such as school councils, parent advisory councils, and the Special Education Administrative Council. School councils, in particular, provide a platform for parents to contribute meaningfully to discussions on school improvement planning, as evidenced by meeting minutes and accounts from both district leaders and parents. One parent spoke very positively about her experience on the school council, although she expressed a need for more parents to join:

They definitely open their arms to having parents come in, and they talk about their plans for the year, and whether there’s, like, recreational stuff going on . . . really the curriculum and finding opportunities to make the school environment and community better throughout the day. So, I do feel there is opportunity. I wish there were more parents who would join. I think there’s great opportunity to really vocalize [the opportunity].

Similarly, another parent at the focus group expressed not being aware that this opportunity existed. Promoting leadership and engagement opportunities for parents and families is an area of growth for the district.

RPS recognizes the importance of forming partnerships to address the needs of its students and families. RPS has established numerous community partnerships, including one with Care Solace, which provides mental health coordination and services to students, families, and school staff. District documents and accounts by district leaders described additional partnerships between RHS and local businesses to provide internship and service-learning opportunities and with Massasoit Community College and Bridgewater State University to provide dual enrollment programs.

In addition, the district has implemented various initiatives aimed at providing comprehensive support to students and families facing socioeconomic challenges. For example, district leaders cited efforts to register students and families for Medicaid and to serve the district’s homeless population by providing bussing directly to the homeless center. As previously noted, the district has a designated EL liaison, who directly engages with EL families. As one district leader explained,

A lot of times she will reach out to these parents first to find out what their primary language is at home to make sure that they understand and feel welcomed into our schools. She might even bring them in and let them tour through the building, so that it’s not overwhelming for the family or the child. So that once they start with us, I think that they feel [a certain] comfort level.

RHS also held a Multilingual Resource and Community Fair in fall 2023, which provided a platform to familiarize ELs and their families with the community and mental health resources that are available to them. Overall, its commitment to meeting the needs of students and families, particularly those who are ELs and/or low income, is a strength for the district.

### DESE Recommendations

* *The district should work with its community and outside partners to assist with translations, so that all students and families have access to the linguistic resources they need to feel safe and included in their school communities.*
* *The district should evaluate access to Tier 1 social emotional support throughout the district and develop strategies to fill gaps in access to school-based counseling at the middle and high school levels.*
* *Given its available staffing and schedule, the district should consider strategies to better provide appropriate tiered interventions for its growing EL population.*
* *The district should work with school-based leaders to effectively disseminate information about family leadership opportunities and actively recruit families who have not typically been represented on district- and school-level leadership bodies.*

## Appendix A. Summary of Site Visit Activities

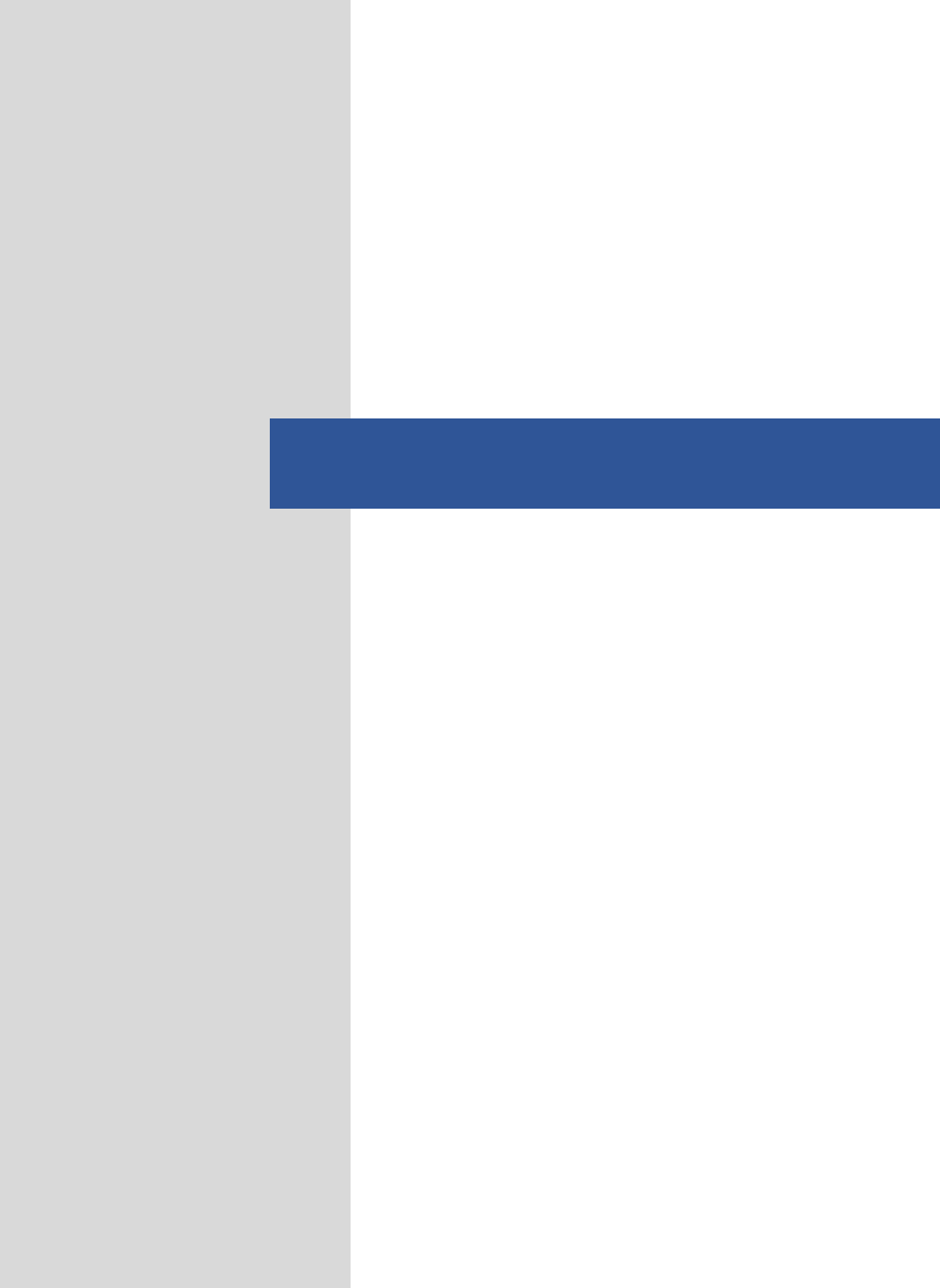
The AIR team completed the following activities as part of the district review activities in RPS. The team conducted 68 classroom observations during the week of February 26, 2024, and held interviews and focus groups between February 26 and 28. The site visit team conducted interviews and focus groups 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

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
* RPS curriculum unit template
* 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

## Appendix B. Districtwide Instructional Observation Report



Rockland Public Schools

Classroom Visits: Summary of Findings

Districtwide Instructional Observation Report

February 2024



201 Jones Road  
Waltham, Massachusetts  
[www.air.org](http://www.air.org)

Contents

**Page**

[Introduction B-3](#_Toc92194253)

[Positive Climate B-5](#_Toc92194254)

[Teacher Sensitivity B-6](#_Toc92194255)

[Regard for Student Perspectives B-7](#_Toc92194256)

[Negative Climate B-8](#_Toc92194257)

[Behavior Management B-9](#_Toc92194258)

[Productivity B-10](#_Toc92194259)

[Instructional Learning Formats B-11](#_Toc92194260)

[Concept Development B-12](#_Toc92194261)

[Content Understanding B-13](#_Toc92194262)

[Analysis and Inquiry B-14](#_Toc92194263)

[Quality of Feedback B-15](#_Toc92194264)

[Language Modeling B-16](#_Toc92194265)

[Instructional Dialogue B-17](#_Toc92194266)

[Student Engagement B-18](#_Toc92194267)

[Summary of Average Ratings: Grades K-5 B-19](#_Toc92194268)

[Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 6-8 B-20](#_Toc92194269)

[Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 9-12 B-21](#_Toc92194270)

[References B-22](#_Toc92194271)

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.

Three observers visited Rockland Public Schools during the week of February 27, 2024. Observers conducted 68 observations in a sample of classrooms across four schools. Observations were conducted in grades K-12 and focused primarily on literacy, 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\*: 5.3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 68 | 5.3 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 10 | 13 | 5 | 30 | 5.7 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 1 | 17 | 5.3 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 21 | 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 4] + [4 x 5] + [5 x 27] + [6 x 23] + [7 x 8]) ÷ 68 observations = 5.3

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\*: 5.8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 68 | 5.8 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 12 | 30 | 6.0 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 17 | 5.8 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 21 | 5.5 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 4, the district average is computed as:   
([3 x 2] + [4 x 6] + [5 x 16] + [6 x 23] + [7 x 21]) ÷ 68 observations = 5.8

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\*: 2.9

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 68 | 2.9 |
| Grades K-5 | 1 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 3.4 |
| Grades 6-8 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 17 | 2.6 |
| Grades 9-12 | 4 | 10 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2.2 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 5, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 8] + [2 x 24] + [3 x 18] + [4 x 7] + [5 x 10] + [6 x 1]) ÷ 68 observations = 2.9

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.[[5]](#footnote-6)

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 | 68 | 6.9 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 28 | 30 | 6.9 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 15 | 17 | 6.8 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 21 | 7.0 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 6, the district average is computed as:   
([5 x 1] + [6 x 3] + [7 x 64]) ÷ 68 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\*: 6.4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 68 | 6.4 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 17 | 30 | 6.3 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 17 | 6.2 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 16 | 21 | 6.8 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 7, the district average is computed as:   
([4 x 1] + [5 x 11] + [6 x 14] + [7 x 42]) ÷ 68 observations = 6.4

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\*: 6.5

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 68 | 6.5 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 22 | 30 | 6.6 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 17 | 6.4 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 15 | 21 | 6.6 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 8, the district average is computed as:   
([4 x 1] + [5 x 8] + [6 x 12] + [7 x 47]) ÷ 68 observations = 6.5

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\*: 5.2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 68 | 5.2 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 16 | 3 | 30 | 5.6 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 17 | 5.0 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 21 | 4.9 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 9, the district average is computed as:   
([3 x 7] + [4 x 7] + [5 x 22] + [6 x 27] + [7 x 5]) ÷ 68 observations = 5.2

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\*: 2.3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 20 | 2.3 |
| Grades K-3\*\* | 2 | 13 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 2.3 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 10, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 2] + [2 x 13] + [3 x 3] + [4 x 2]) ÷ 20 observations = 2.3

\*\*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\*: 4.6

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 48 | 4.6 |
| Grades 4-5\*\* | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 4.3 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 17 | 4.4 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 21 | 4.8 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 11, the district average is computed as:   
([2 x 2] + [3 x 5] + [4 x 14] + [5 x 18] + [6 x 9]) ÷ 48 observations = 4.6

\*\*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\*: 2.2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 48 | 2.2 |
| Grades 4-5\*\* | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 2.3 |
| Grades 6-8 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 2.4 |
| Grades 9-12 | 8 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2.1 |

\*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 5] + [4 x 8] + [5 x 1]) ÷ 48 observations = 2.2

\*\*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\*: 2.7

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 68 | 2.7 |
| Grades K-5 | 2 | 13 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 2.6 |
| Grades 6-8 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 2.8 |
| Grades 9-12 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2.7 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 13, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 7] + [2 x 29] + [3 x 17] + [4 x 9] + [5 x 6]) ÷ 68 observations = 2.7

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\*: 3.4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 20 | 3.4 |
| Grades K-3\*\* | 0 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 20 | 3.4 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 14, the district average is computed as:   
([2 x 6] + [3 x 6] + [4 x 3] + [5 x 4] + [6 x 1]) ÷ 20 observations = 3.4

\*\*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\*: 2.8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 48 | 2.8 |
| Grades 4-5\*\* | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 2.8 |
| Grades 6-8 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 17 | 3.2 |
| Grades 9-12 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2.5 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 15, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 9] + [2 x 16] + [3 x 7] + [4 x 10] + [5 x 3] + [6 x 3]) ÷ 48 observations = 2.8

\*\*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\*: 5.1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 48 | 5.1 |
| Grades 4-5\*\* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 5.8 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 17 | 5.3 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 21 | 4.7 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 16, the district average is computed as:   
([2 x 1] + [3 x 1] + [4 x 11] + [5 x 16] + [6 x 15] + [7 x 4]) ÷ 48 observations = 5.1

\*\*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 | 1 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 26 | 24 | 45 | 120 | 5.5 |
| Positive Climate | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 10 | 13 | 5 | 30 | 5.7 |
| Negative Climate\*\* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 28 | 30 | 6.9 |
| Teacher Sensitivity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 12 | 30 | 6.0 |
| Regard for Student Perspectives | 1 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 3.4 |
| Classroom Organization Domain | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 18 | 27 | 42 | 90 | 6.2 |
| Behavior Management | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 17 | 30 | 6.3 |
| Productivity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 22 | 30 | 6.6 |
| Instructional Learning Formats\*\*\* | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 16 | 3 | 30 | 5.6 |
| Instructional Support Domain | 9 | 39 | 24 | 15 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 100 | 2.9 |
| Concept Development (K-3 only) | 2 | 13 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 2.3 |
| Content Understanding (UE only) | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 4.3 |
| Analysis and Inquiry (UE only) | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 2.3 |
| Quality of Feedback | 2 | 13 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 2.6 |
| Language Modeling (K-3 only) | 0 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 20 | 3.4 |
| Instructional Dialogue (UE only) | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 2.8 |
| Student Engagement (UE only) | **0** | **0** | **0** | **1** | **3** | **3** | **3** | **10** | **5.8** |

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([4 x 2] + [5 x 10] + [6 x 13] + [7 x 5]) ÷ 30 observations = 5.7

\*\*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 2] + [7 x 28]) ÷ 30 observations = 6.9. 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 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 10 | 14 | 7 | 51 | 4.6 |
| Positive Climate | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 1 | 17 | 5.3 |
| Teacher Sensitivity | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 17 | 5.8 |
| Regard for Student Perspectives | 3 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 17 | 2.6 |
| Classroom Organization Domain | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 7 | 34 | 51 | 6.5 |
| Behavior Management | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 17 | 6.2 |
| Productivity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 17 | 6.4 |
| Negative Climate\*\* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 15 | 17 | 6.8 |
| Instructional Support Domain | 5 | 24 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 13 | 1 | 85 | 3.6 |
| Instructional Learning Formats | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 17 | 5.0 |
| Content Understanding | 0 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 17 | 4.4 |
| Analysis and Inquiry | 2 | 10 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 2.4 |
| Quality of Feedback | 2 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 2.8 |
| Instructional Dialogue | 1 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 17 | 3.2 |
| Student Engagement | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 17 | 5.3 |

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([2 x 1] + [4 x 1] + [5 x 7] + [6 x 7] + [7 x 1]) ÷ 17 observations = 5.3

\*\*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: ([5 x 1] + [6 x 1] + [7 x 15]) ÷ 17 observations = 6.8

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 | 4 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 17 | 11 | 5 | 63 | 4.2 |
| Positive Climate | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 21 | 4.9 |
| Teacher Sensitivity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 21 | 5.5 |
| Regard for Student Perspectives | 4 | 10 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2.2 |
| Classroom Organization Domain | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 52 | 63 | 6.8 |
| Behavior Management | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 16 | 21 | 6.8 |
| Productivity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 15 | 21 | 6.6 |
| Negative Climate\*\* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 21 | 7.0 |
| Instructional Support Domain | 17 | 24 | 10 | 21 | 23 | 9 | 1 | 105 | 3.4 |
| Instructional Learning Formats | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 21 | 4.9 |
| Content Understanding | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 21 | 4.8 |
| Analysis and Inquiry | 8 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2.1 |
| Quality of Feedback | 3 | 10 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2.7 |
| Instructional Dialogue | 6 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2.5 |
| Student Engagement | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 21 | 4.7 |

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([3 x 4] + [4 x 2] + [5 x 10] + [6 x 3] + [7 x 2]) ÷ 21 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 21]) ÷ 21 observations = 7.0

References

Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning. (n.d.). *Measuring and improving teacher-student interactions in PK−12 settings to enhance students’ learning*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia. Retrieved from <http://www.teachstone.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/class-mtp-pk-12-brief.pdf>

MET Project. (2010). *The CLASS protocol for classroom observations*. Seattle, WA: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Retrieved from <http://metproject.org/resources/CLASS_10_29_10.pdf>

Pianta, R. C., Hamre, B. K., & Mintz, S. (2012). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Manual, Secondary.* Charlottesville, VA:Teachstone.

Pianta, R. C., Hamre, B. K., & Mintz, S. (2012). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Manual, Upper Elementary.* Charlottesville, VA:Teachstone.

Pianta, R. C., La Paro, K. M., & Hamre, B. K. (2008). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Manual, K–3.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

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

Table C1. 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) | This curriculum guide provides curricular overviews for schools to engage students in learning DLCS concepts and skills aligned to the standards 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 align to the Massachusetts 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) | This resource promotes 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 an MTSS for ELA/literacy, and much more. |
| [Massachusetts Blueprint for English Learner Success](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/default.html) | A framework for EL education in Massachusetts, with embedded Quick Reference Guides 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 C2. 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 the Department of Early Education and Care 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 C3. 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 and schools related to state requirements for 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 and 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 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 goal of the Breakfast After the Bell Toolkit Series is 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. |

## Appendix D. Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | District | Percentage of total | State | Percentage of total |
| All | 2,140 | 100.0% | 914,959 | 100.0% |
| African American | 130 | 6.1% | 88,104 | 9.6% |
| Asian | 42 | 2.0% | 67,847 | 7.4% |
| Hispanic | 454 | 21.2% | 229,930 | 25.1% |
| Native American | 18 | 0.8% | 2,178 | 0.2% |
| White | 1,416 | 66.2% | 484,692 | 53.0% |
| Native Hawaiian | 1 | 0.0% | 790 | 0.1% |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | 79 | 3.7% | 41,418 | 4.5% |

*Note*. As of October 1, 2023.

Table D2. Rockland Public Schools: Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations, 2023-2024

|  | District | | | State | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | *N* | Percentage of high needs | Percentage of district | *N* | Percentage of high needs | Percentage of state |
| All students with high needs | 1,265 | 100.0% | 58.4% | 515,939 | 100.0% | 55.8% |
| Students with disabilities | 430 | 34.0% | 19.8% | 187,160 | 36.3% | 20.2% |
| Low-income | 1,011 | 79.9% | 47.2% | 385,697 | 74.8% | 42.2% |
| English learner | 242 | 19.1% | 11.3% | 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 2,167; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 924,947.

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | *N* (2023) | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All students | 2,247 | 35.4 | 27.6 | 21.9 | 22.2 |
| African American/Black | 140 | 52.9 | 36.7 | 21.4 | 25.3 |
| Asian | 41 | 44.8 | 10.3 | 14.6 | 13.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 478 | 51.0 | 39.7 | 32.4 | 34.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 78 | 36.1 | 28.4 | 26.9 | 23.3 |
| Native American | 19 | — | 47.4 | 31.6 | 33.5 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 1 | — | — | — | 28.3 |
| White | 1,490 | 29.8 | 23.4 | 18.5 | 17.0 |
| High needs | 1,357 | 45.9 | 36.1 | 28.7 | 30.3 |
| Low income | 1,162 | — | 38.4 | 30.6 | 33.5 |
| ELs | 250 | 52.4 | 39.8 | 33.2 | 33.5 |
| Students w/disabilities | 428 | 38.4 | 27.6 | 24.1 | 30.4 |

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

Table D4. Rockland 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 | $25,557,225 | $25,527,588 | $26,222,802 | $26,092,330 | $26,338,220 | $26,466,997 |
| By municipality | $15,219,809 | $15,703,473 | $16,057,116 | $18,282,618 | $18,074,412 | $39,969,265 |
| Total from local appropriations | $40,777,034 | $41,231,061 | $42,279,918 | $44,374,949 | $44,412,632 | $66,436,262 |
| From revolving funds and grants | — | $5,453,350 | — | $6,941,393 | — | $9,111,146 |
| Total expenditures | — | $46,684,411 | — | $51,316,342 | — | $75,547,408 |
| Chapter 70 aid to education program | | | | | | |
| Chapter 70 state aida | — | $13,843,235 | — | $14,728,597 | — | $14,800,061 |
| Required local contribution | — | $13,793,841 | — | $14,473,503 | — | $14,836,781 |
| Required net school spendingb | — | $27,637,076 | — | $29,202,100 | — | $29,636,842 |
| Actual net school spending | — | $34,898,292 | — | $35,800,723 | — | $36,496,090 |
| Over/under required ($) | — | $7,261,216 | — | $6,598,623 | — | $6,859,248 |
| Over/under required (%) | — | 26.3% | — | 22.6% | — | 23.1% |

*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. Rockland Public Schools: Expenditures Per In-District Pupil, Fiscal Years 2020-2022

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Expenditure category | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Administration | $537 | $583 | $755 |
| Instructional leadership (district and school) | $1,362 | $1,440 | $1,568 |
| Teachers | $5,554 | $6,571 | $7,336 |
| Other teaching services | $1,103 | $1,225 | $1,292 |
| Professional development | $144 | $183 | $89 |
| Instructional materials, equipment, and technology | $415 | $560 | $620 |
| Guidance, counseling, and testing services | $481 | $546 | $577 |
| Pupil services | $1,336 | $1,651 | $1,717 |
| Operations and maintenance | $884 | $1,104 | $1,341 |
| Insurance, retirement, and other fixed costs | $3,836 | $4,181 | $4,471 |
| Total expenditures per in-district pupil | $15,653 | $18,044 | $19,767 |

*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. Rockland Public Schools: Student Performance Data

[Table E1. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023 E-2](#_Toc158035151)

[Table E2. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-2](#_Toc158035152)

[Table E3. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023 E-3](#_Toc158035153)

[Table E4. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-3](#_Toc158035154)

[Table E5. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Student Group, Grades 5 and 8, 2022-2023 E-4](#_Toc158035155)

[Table E6. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-4](#_Toc158035156)

[Table E7. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023 E-5](#_Toc158035157)

[Table E8. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023 E-5](#_Toc158035158)

[Table E9. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023 E-6](#_Toc158035159)

[Table E10. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023 E-7](#_Toc158035160)

[Table E11. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-7](#_Toc158035161)

[Table E12. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023 E-8](#_Toc158035162)

[Table E13. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-8](#_Toc158035163)

[Table E14. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Grade, 2022-2023 E-9](#_Toc158035164)

[Table E15. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Grade, 2022-2023 E-9](#_Toc158035165)

[Table E16. Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022 E-9](#_Toc158035166)

[Table E17. Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2019-2021 E-10](#_Toc158035167)

[Table E18. Annual Dropout Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022 E-10](#_Toc158035168)

[Table E19. In-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023 E-11](#_Toc158035169)

[Table E20. Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023 E-11](#_Toc158035170)

[Table E21. Advanced Coursework Completion Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023 E-12](#_Toc158035171)

[Table E22. Accountability Percentile and Classification, 2023 E-12](#_Toc158035172)

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 | 1,051 | 40 | 39 | 42 | 42 | 42 | 39 | 18 | 19 | 19 |
| African American/Black | 68 | 25 | 24 | 26 | 58 | 56 | 45 | 17 | 21 | 29 |
| Asian | 19 | 71 | 63 | 64 | 21 | 37 | 27 | 7 | 0 | 9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 197 | 28 | 27 | 22 | 41 | 41 | 43 | 31 | 32 | 34 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 42 | 50 | 50 | 49 | 50 | 48 | 35 | 0 | 2 | 16 |
| Native American | 11 | 45 | 36 | 29 | 27 | 45 | 42 | 27 | 18 | 28 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 45 | — | — | 37 | — | — | 18 |
| White | 714 | 43 | 42 | 50 | 41 | 41 | 37 | 16 | 16 | 13 |
| High needs | 640 | 27 | 26 | 24 | 46 | 46 | 45 | 27 | 28 | 31 |
| Low income | 536 | 29 | 28 | 24 | 47 | 46 | 44 | 24 | 25 | 32 |
| ELs and former ELs | 159 | 19 | 19 | 20 | 44 | 45 | 42 | 37 | 36 | 38 |
| Students w/disabilities | 239 | 8 | 8 | 12 | 41 | 45 | 40 | 50 | 47 | 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 | 139 | 53 | 53 | 58 | 41 | 32 | 30 | 6 | 15 | 11 |
| African American/Black | 7 | 33 | — | 42 | 58 | — | 41 | 8 | — | 17 |
| Asian | 2 | — | — | 79 | — | — | 16 | — | — | 5 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 28 | 32 | 25 | 36 | 59 | 43 | 39 | 9 | 32 | 24 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 5 | — | — | 63 | — | — | 29 | — | — | 9 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 42 | — | — | 41 | — | — | 18 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 41 | — | — | 47 | — | — | 11 |
| White | 95 | 61 | 63 | 67 | 34 | 29 | 27 | 5 | 7 | 6 |
| High needs | 76 | 33 | 36 | 37 | 58 | 37 | 42 | 9 | 28 | 21 |
| Low income | 69 | 33 | 39 | 39 | 60 | 39 | 40 | 7 | 22 | 21 |
| ELs and former ELs | 18 | — | 6 | 16 | — | 39 | 39 | — | 56 | 45 |
| Students w/disabilities | 20 | 18 | 5 | 22 | 59 | 40 | 47 | 24 | 55 | 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 | 1,053 | 39 | 42 | 41 | 45 | 42 | 41 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| African American/Black | 68 | 27 | 31 | 21 | 52 | 44 | 47 | 22 | 25 | 32 |
| Asian | 19 | 57 | 79 | 71 | 36 | 21 | 23 | 7 | 0 | 6 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 197 | 24 | 29 | 19 | 50 | 47 | 47 | 26 | 24 | 34 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 42 | 50 | 52 | 46 | 41 | 43 | 38 | 9 | 5 | 16 |
| Native American | 11 | 55 | 55 | 28 | 36 | 27 | 46 | 9 | 18 | 26 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 41 | — | — | 43 | — | — | 16 |
| White | 716 | 42 | 45 | 49 | 44 | 41 | 40 | 13 | 15 | 11 |
| High needs | 642 | 26 | 30 | 23 | 50 | 46 | 47 | 24 | 25 | 30 |
| Low income | 538 | 27 | 31 | 21 | 51 | 46 | 48 | 22 | 23 | 31 |
| ELs and former ELs | 158 | 18 | 28 | 21 | 53 | 44 | 44 | 28 | 28 | 34 |
| Students w/disabilities | 240 | 10 | 13 | 13 | 42 | 39 | 41 | 48 | 48 | 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 | 137 | 32 | 47 | 50 | 60 | 44 | 42 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| African American/Black | 8 | 0 | — | 27 | 83 | — | 58 | 17 | — | 15 |
| Asian | 2 | — | — | 80 | — | — | 17 | — | — | 3 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 28 | 22 | 32 | 25 | 65 | 46 | 57 | 13 | 21 | 18 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 5 | — | — | 54 | — | — | 39 | — | — | 8 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 32 | — | — | 59 | — | — | 10 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 36 | — | — | 57 | — | — | 7 |
| White | 93 | 41 | 54 | 60 | 54 | 42 | 36 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| High needs | 74 | 21 | 32 | 27 | 64 | 50 | 57 | 14 | 18 | 16 |
| Low income | 67 | 22 | 36 | 27 | 69 | 49 | 57 | 8 | 15 | 16 |
| ELs and former ELs | 18 | — | 11 | 14 | — | 50 | 58 | — | 39 | 28 |
| Students w/disabilities | 20 | 18 | 5 | 16 | 53 | 60 | 59 | 29 | 35 | 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 | 333 | 36 | 32 | 41 | 49 | 44 | 40 | 15 | 24 | 19 |
| African American/Black | 19 | 26 | 21 | 21 | 58 | 53 | 47 | 16 | 26 | 32 |
| Asian | 4 | — | — | 65 | — | — | 27 | — | — | 8 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 49 | 25 | 18 | 20 | 49 | 39 | 45 | 26 | 43 | 35 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 16 | — | 38 | 47 | — | 50 | 37 | — | 13 | 15 |
| Native American | 2 | — | — | 31 | — | — | 44 | — | — | 25 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 43 | — | — | 41 | — | — | 16 |
| White | 243 | 41 | 33 | 50 | 47 | 45 | 38 | 12 | 21 | 11 |
| High needs | 203 | 22 | 21 | 23 | 54 | 43 | 46 | 24 | 36 | 31 |
| Low income | 170 | 24 | 22 | 22 | 54 | 42 | 46 | 22 | 36 | 32 |
| ELs and former ELs | 43 | 14 | 14 | 18 | 59 | 35 | 43 | 27 | 51 | 39 |
| Students w/disabilities | 77 | 10 | 9 | 14 | 44 | 29 | 40 | 46 | 62 | 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 | 121 | 55 | 56 | 47 | 35 | 37 | 42 | 10 | 7 | 11 |
| African American/Black | 8 | 27 | — | 26 | 36 | — | 55 | 36 | — | 20 |
| Asian | 2 | — | — | 75 | — | — | 21 | — | — | 4 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 22 | 22 | 32 | 24 | 67 | 50 | 52 | 11 | 18 | 24 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 5 | — | — | 51 | — | — | 39 | — | — | 10 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 30 | — | — | 58 | — | — | 12 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 31 | — | — | 54 | — | — | 15 |
| White | 83 | 66 | 66 | 55 | 27 | 31 | 39 | 7 | 2 | 6 |
| High needs | 62 | 32 | 40 | 26 | 49 | 47 | 54 | 19 | 13 | 21 |
| Low income | 57 | 35 | 44 | 26 | 49 | 46 | 53 | 16 | 11 | 21 |
| ELs and former ELs | 11 | — | 0 | 13 | — | 55 | 50 | — | 45 | 38 |
| Students w/disabilities | 19 | 20 | 0 | 16 | 40 | 74 | 53 | 40 | 26 | 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 | 167 | 37 | 40 | 44 | 44 | 48 | 40 | 19 | 13 | 16 |
| 4 | 174 | 43 | 40 | 40 | 46 | 48 | 43 | 11 | 13 | 17 |
| 5 | 144 | 53 | 31 | 44 | 36 | 54 | 40 | 12 | 15 | 16 |
| 6 | 183 | 32 | 49 | 42 | 44 | 31 | 34 | 24 | 20 | 24 |
| 7 | 196 | 33 | 32 | 40 | 42 | 44 | 40 | 25 | 24 | 19 |
| 8 | 187 | 43 | 41 | 44 | 41 | 33 | 34 | 16 | 26 | 22 |
| 3-8 | 1,051 | 40 | 39 | 42 | 42 | 42 | 39 | 18 | 19 | 19 |
| 10 | 139 | 53 | 53 | 58 | 41 | 32 | 30 | 6 | 15 | 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 | 167 | 42 | 43 | 41 | 39 | 41 | 39 | 19 | 16 | 20 |
| 4 | 174 | 52 | 56 | 45 | 34 | 36 | 37 | 14 | 9 | 18 |
| 5 | 144 | 27 | 35 | 41 | 61 | 51 | 46 | 11 | 14 | 13 |
| 6 | 183 | 44 | 43 | 41 | 40 | 46 | 42 | 16 | 10 | 17 |
| 7 | 196 | 34 | 38 | 38 | 48 | 36 | 40 | 18 | 26 | 22 |
| 8 | 189 | 37 | 36 | 38 | 47 | 42 | 42 | 16 | 22 | 20 |
| 3-8 | 1,053 | 39 | 42 | 41 | 45 | 42 | 41 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 10 | 137 | 32 | 47 | 50 | 60 | 44 | 42 | 8 | 9 | 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 | 144 | 37 | 36 | 42 | 46 | 43 | 40 | 17 | 21 | 19 |
| 8 | 189 | 35 | 28 | 41 | 52 | 46 | 40 | 13 | 26 | 19 |
| 5 and 8 | 333 | 36 | 32 | 41 | 49 | 44 | 40 | 15 | 24 | 19 |
| 10 | 121 | 55 | 56 | 47 | 35 | 37 | 42 | 10 | 7 | 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 | 815 | 50.4 | 49.1 | 49.7 |
| African American/Black | 52 | 43.2 | 39.9 | 48.0 |
| Asian | 12 | — | — | 56.4 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 134 | 49.1 | 52.7 | 47.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 34 | 54.2 | 50.9 | 50.0 |
| Native American | 8 | — | — | 46.7 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 50.5 |
| White | 575 | 51.1 | 49.0 | 50.0 |
| High needs | 474 | 45.8 | 48.1 | 47.3 |
| Low income | 399 | 46.9 | 48.2 | 47.0 |
| ELs and former ELs | 102 | 42.7 | 52.2 | 49.7 |
| Students w/disabilities | 173 | 40.1 | 47.5 | 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 | 116 | 44.1 | 39.3 | 49.5 |
| African American/Black | 7 | — | — | 45.5 |
| Asian | 2 | — | — | 56.2 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 23 | — | 41.9 | 45.1 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 4 | — | — | 51.3 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 46.4 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 45.2 |
| White | 79 | 41.0 | 40.9 | 50.7 |
| High needs | 57 | 45.8 | 39.8 | 44.7 |
| Low income | 52 | 45.0 | 41.9 | 44.9 |
| ELs and former ELs | 12 | — | — | 42.1 |
| Students w/disabilities | 13 | — | — | 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 | 819 | 52.6 | 51.3 | 49.8 |
| African American/Black | 52 | 49.6 | 42.1 | 47.8 |
| Asian | 12 | — | — | 57.7 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 137 | 50.8 | 52.4 | 47.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 34 | 67.6 | 53.0 | 50.3 |
| Native American | 8 | — | — | 47.1 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 51.5 |
| White | 576 | 52.2 | 51.6 | 50.1 |
| High needs | 478 | 49.4 | 49.5 | 47.8 |
| Low income | 402 | 50.6 | 50.0 | 47.3 |
| ELs and former ELs | 103 | 46.3 | 51.3 | 49.3 |
| Students w/disabilities | 176 | 42.2 | 44.2 | 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 | 115 | 41.2 | 45.7 | 49.6 |
| African American/Black | 7 | — | — | 41.4 |
| Asian | 2 | — | — | 55.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 23 | — | 48.8 | 41.8 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 4 | — | — | 51.1 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 45.4 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 56.1 |
| White | 78 | 40.2 | 44.5 | 52.9 |
| High needs | 56 | 42.5 | 48.5 | 43.9 |
| Low income | 51 | 40.0 | 48.4 | 43.2 |
| ELs and former ELs | 12 | — | — | 40.2 |
| Students w/disabilities | 13 | — | — | 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 | 158 | 59.9 | 59.0 | 49.4 |
| 5 | 137 | 52.3 | 33.9 | 49.8 |
| 6 | 170 | 46.0 | 50.4 | 49.9 |
| 7 | 176 | 44.9 | 45.9 | 49.9 |
| 8 | 174 | 50.3 | 53.8 | 49.7 |
| 3-8 | 815 | 50.4 | 49.1 | 49.7 |
| 10 | 116 | 44.1 | 39.3 | 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 | 159 | 64.2 | 61.0 | 49.6 |
| 5 | 137 | 46.5 | 31.2 | 50.0 |
| 6 | 170 | 55.9 | 58.7 | 49.9 |
| 7 | 177 | 53.8 | 52.0 | 49.9 |
| 8 | 176 | 44.3 | 50.3 | 49.7 |
| 3-8 | 819 | 52.6 | 51.3 | 49.8 |
| 10 | 115 | 41.2 | 45.7 | 49.6 |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2022) | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | State (2022) |
| All | 160 | 88.1 | 90.5 | 86.3 | 90.1 |
| African American/Black | 7 | 71.4 | — | 100 | 86.2 |
| Asian | 3 | — | — | — | 96.2 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 26 | 90.5 | 84.0 | 80.8 | 81.2 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 9 | 88.9 | 100 | 77.8 | 88.7 |
| Native American | — | — | — | — | 82.2 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | — | 81.3 |
| White | 115 | 88.4 | 92.0 | 87.0 | 93.2 |
| High needs | 98 | 79.1 | 82.9 | 78.6 | 83.9 |
| Low income | 84 | 80.5 | 83.6 | 78.6 | 83.2 |
| English learner | 11 | 75.0 | 84.6 | 72.7 | 73.1 |
| Students w/disabilities | 34 | 54.2 | 70.0 | 61.8 | 78.0 |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2021) | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | State (2021) |
| All | 137 | 89.1 | 91.5 | 91.2 | 91.8 |
| African American/Black | 5 | 100 | 71.4 | — | 88.1 |
| Asian | 1 | — | — | — | 97.0 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 25 | 86.7 | 90.5 | 84.0 | 84.0 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 6 | — | 100 | 100 | 91.2 |
| Native American | — | — | — | — | 84.1 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | — | 87.7 |
| White | 100 | 88.5 | 92.0 | 93.0 | 94.4 |
| High needs | 70 | 78.8 | 85.7 | 84.3 | 85.8 |
| Low income | 67 | 82.2 | 85.7 | 85.1 | 85.1 |
| English learner | 13 | — | 75.0 | 84.6 | 78.0 |
| Students w/disabilities | 20 | 68.8 | 70.8 | 75.0 | 80.6 |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2022) | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | State (2022) |
| All | 543 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 2.1 |
| African American/Black | 38 | 4.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.8 |
| Asian | 8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.6 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 92 | 5.8 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 4.3 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 24 | 0.0 | 3.8 | 4.2 | 2.4 |
| Native American | — | — | — | — | 4.3 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | — | 1.2 |
| White | 381 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.3 |
| High needs | 282 | 4.4 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 3.6 |
| Low income | 243 | — | — | 2.9 | 3.8 |
| English learner | 29 | 2.9 | 8.3 | 3.4 | 7.8 |
| Students w/disabilities | 74 | 3.9 | 3.5 | 5.4 | 3.4 |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 2,243 | 0.2 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.4 |
| African American/Black | 143 | — | 3.5 | 5.6 | 2.1 |
| Asian | 41 | — | — | — | 0.3 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 477 | 0.2 | 1.1 | 1.7 | 1.8 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 76 | — | — | 3.9 | 1.6 |
| Native American | 20 | — | — | — | 1.5 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 1 | — | — | — | 1.4 |
| White | 1,485 | 0.3 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.2 |
| High needs | 1,361 | 0.2 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.0 |
| Low income | 1,154 | — | 1.8 | 3.0 | 2.1 |
| English learner | 256 | — | 0.8 | 2.0 | 1.3 |
| Students w/disabilities | 455 | 0.2 | 3.0 | 2.6 | 2.5 |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 2,243 | 0.9 | 4.9 | 5.5 | 2.5 |
| African American/Black | 143 | — | 11.1 | 10.5 | 5.0 |
| Asian | 41 | — | — | — | 0.6 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 477 | 2.0 | 6.3 | 6.9 | 3.9 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 76 | — | — | 14.5 | 3.0 |
| Native American | 20 | — | — | — | 4.1 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 1 | — | — | — | 3.1 |
| White | 1,485 | 0.4 | 3.9 | 4.2 | 1.6 |
| High needs | 1,361 | 1.4 | 6.7 | 7.2 | 3.8 |
| Low income | 1,154 | — | 7.4 | 7.5 | 4.3 |
| English learner | 256 | — | 4.4 | 3.9 | 2.7 |
| Students w/disabilities | 455 | 2.0 | 7.5 | 7.7 | 4.7 |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 258 | 62.1 | 63.1 | 69.0 | 65.8 |
| African American/Black | 18 | 50.0 | 60.0 | 50.0 | 57.3 |
| Asian | 6 | — | — | 100 | 84.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 49 | 37.2 | 25.5 | 40.8 | 51.2 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 4 | 50.0 | 50.0 | — | 67.4 |
| Native American | 3 | — | — | — | 50.6 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | — | 60.0 |
| White | 178 | 68.1 | 71.6 | 78.1 | 70.4 |
| High needs | 138 | 38.0 | 42.5 | 51.4 | 49.8 |
| Low income | 121 | — | 44.9 | 54.5 | 50.7 |
| English learner | 17 | 23.8 | 9.1 | 11.8 | 31.7 |
| Students w/disabilities | 31 | 10.0 | 5.0 | 16.1 | 36.0 |

Table E22. Accountability Percentile and Classification, 2023

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School | Progress toward improvement targets (%) | Percentile | Overall classification | Reason for classification |
| District | 41 | — | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Moderate progress toward targets |
| Jefferson Elementary School | 85 | 73 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| Memorial Park | 81 | 52 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| R. Stewart Esten | 76 | 61 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| John W. Rogers Middle | 30 | 30 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Moderate progress toward targets |
| Rockland Senior High | 43 | 23 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Moderate progress toward targets |

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. CURATE: CUrriculum RAtings by TEachers. See <https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/curate>. [↑](#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. 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-6)