**Level 5 Schools 2016–17 Quarter 3 Report: Morgan Full Service Community School**

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| **School Information** | | **Student Enrollment and Demographics** | |
| **Location** | Holyoke, Massachusetts | **Total SY 2016–17 Enrollment** | 411 |
| **Current Status** | Level 5 | **Percentage SWDs** | 21% |
| **Receiver Name** | Dr. Stephen Zrike | **Percentage ELLs** | 39% |
| **Year Designated Level 5** | 2013 | **Percentage Black** | 4% |
| **Year Designated Level 4** | 2010 | **Percentage Latino/Hispanic** | 90% |
| **Grade Span** | PK–8 | **Percentage Asian** | 1% |
| **Number of Full-Time Staff in SY 2016–17** | 59 | **Percentage White** | 2% |
| **Percentage Multirace** | 3% |
| **Priority Areas** | | | |
| **Priority Area 1:** Recruitment and development of professional talent.  **Priority Area 2:** Systems to support professional learning and responsiveness in practice.  **Priority Area 3:** Creating a Center of Excellence for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).  **Priority Area 4:** Targeted and aligned resources.  **Priority Area 5:** Enhancing and sustaining family and community engagement. | | | |

Content provided by Receiver Stephen Zrike.

**Executive Summary**

Morgan Full Service Community School (Morgan) leadership and staff have continued to remain focused on providing high-quality, standards-based core instruction for all students as well as intervention and differentiated instruction to close learning gaps. During this last reporting period, Morgan has gotten better at using both STAR and Achievement Network (ANet) reports and platforms to focus on individual and group student needs to both identify and address the next instructional steps to move students closer to grade-level proficiency on standards. As they become more familiar with these resources, teachers are taking the initiative to generate reports that best serve their needs and develop instructional plans independently and in a more timely fashion. The growth data generated from STAR demonstrate progress in this instructional area.

Morgan leaders are building capacity and ownership of the turnaround work with teachers. Peer observations and a consistent protocol for effective feedback are critical components of this capacity building. Coaches and instructional leadership team (ILT) members are taking on a greater role in leading and facilitating professional learning, allowing for smaller, more focused teams and freeing up Morgan administration for other important leadership duties.

**Updates on Priority Areas**

**Priority Area 1:** Recruitment and development of professional talent.

* **Highlight:** Morgan teachers continue to receive frequent face-to-face feedback from school and district leaders that is aligned to Morgan’s instructional focus and powerful practice of purposing lessons, as well as the district’s instructional priorities (Standards of Mathematical Practices 1: Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, 3: Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, and 6: Attend to precision in all grades; Fundations implementation in Grades K–1; and community and collaboration with peers in K–2). This feedback and recursive practice informs planning and the work of professional learning communities (PLCs), and provides consistent expectations for instructional practice, implementation, and feedback at the classroom level.
* **Highlight:** Since the previous quarterly report and as a result of staffing stabilization, the ELA instructional leadership specialist (ILS) has returned to coaching full time and the math ILS has developed a more effective and balanced system for coaching and coordinating the Blueprint Schools Network (Blueprint) math tutors. As a result, both are engaged in regular coaching cycles for individual teachers, leading and planning professional learning that includes content planning on Wednesday–Friday mornings, and building the capacity of teachers to use student data and feedback to plan and accelerate instruction.
* **Highlight:** Purposing lessons is a powerful practice at Morgan and has been a focus of all professional learning and feedback in recent weeks. A specific and standards-based purpose is in every lesson plan and is posted in classrooms and referred back to during lessons. Professional learning was intentionally differentiated for regular classroom teachers and specialty/intervention teachers to address the different time constraints and nature of their teaching. All teachers are engaged in peer observations focused on this practice to provide a safe practice space and feedback to improve.
* **Challenge:** Although many of the staffing issues from the beginning of the year have been resolved and teachers have been hired, there are still gaps in effective and consistent staffing at the level needed for turnaround work. Morgan leadership estimates that approximately 70% of the current staff are the right fit and in the right positions for the required work. Science, middle school, special education, and English language development (ELD) are particular concerns. As a result, instructional leaders and coaches must provide support and on-board new and inexperienced staff to fill gaps and get them up to speed. This impacts the momentum and acceleration of the turnaround work as well as leaders’ and coaches’ capacity to give attention to higher levels of instruction.

**Priority Area 2:** Systems to support professional learning and responsiveness in practice.

* **Highlight:** Since the last quarterly report, Morgan teachers have received more training on the resources connected to STAR reading and math testing. They have learned how to navigate the various data points and use the platform to locate re-teaching resources. This has enabled teachers to focus on and plan for the specific instructional needs of students relative to the standards to continue growth toward proficiency.
* **Highlight:** As highlighted in the previous quarterly report, Morgan leadership has worked with their district instructional support liaison to differentiate district support for specific Morgan needs. They began the school year using the district feedback tool called Praise, Question, Suggestion(PQS) with the liaison and administrators to calibrate their lens and feedback. As planned, the district instructional support liaison has shifted her focus of this work to the two content ILSs. She has joined the coaching meetings and is updated on the mid-year data so that she can build the capacity of the coaches to give feedback and engage in a tighter and more strategic coaching cycle. The coaches are engaging in three major areas of work: observation and feedback, coaching individual teachers, and planning and presenting professional development for staff.
* **Highlight:** Morgan staff are learning to use the various student data sources and platforms strategically to focus on high-leverage instructional planning and implementation to move students incrementally toward grade-level standards. Teachers are relying on the ANet platform and resources to use and teach computer enhancements aligned to the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) 2.0 (e.g., drag-and-drop answers). Integrating these into daily lesson planning is happening in the morning PLCs; Morgan leadership is observing a significant increase in technology used in daily lessons when they do classroom visits, and there is a greater demand for use of the computer labs during content instructional time.
* **Challenge:** There continue to be challenges as a result of the implementation of SchoolBrains and STAR. Morgan leadership is working closely with the district to resolve data access, retrieval, and reporting challenges, including the ability to disaggregate scores for subgroups (English learners [ELs] and students with disabilities [SWDs]). Issues are being resolved, but the time and effort involved impacts timely response and momentum for instructional planning and implementation.

**Priority Area 3:** Creating a Center of Excellence for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

* **Highlight:** STEM Challenges continue to be used regularly and are moving beyond the level of task compliance. Teachers in Grades 2, 4, and 5 are creating additional Challenges on their own and are using two or three Challenges for every unit. There is evidence of increased teacher ownership and understanding of concepts so that they can use the results and student responses to make informed instructional decisions.
* **Highlight:** Student scores on the open-response items requiring use of Claim Evidence Reasoning (CER) that follow STEM Challenges are improving. Combined with the evidence of more hands-on STEM Challenges, this indicates increased and deeper understanding of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in both teaching and learning.
* **Highlight:** As part of a districtwide initiative, Morgan kindergarten is implementing the Focus on K2 framework, which includes collaborative, inquiry-based center time that integrates content literacy. Morgan leaders and teachers have rewritten and reorganized the units so that they align to the NGSS and include STEM Challenges. In this way, kindergarten is aligned to the work of the other grades at Morgan and the integration of NGSS throughout the school.
* **Challenge:** Despite recruiting efforts and multiple rounds of posting and interviewing, Morgan still does not have a highly qualified teacher in middle school science (Grades 6–8). The STEM director continues to write lesson plans for an experienced building substitute to deliver. However, the substitute lacks the content knowledge and experience to teach and assess the content in a deep and effective manner. As a result, students are not achieving well in the life science units and on the related standards.

**Priority Area 4:** Targeted and aligned resources.

* **Highlight:** Morgan has just completed its fourth cycle of data analysis and planning for intervention. During this process, students are assigned to groups based on emerging data and instructional need. Historically, this work has been primarily “leader” prepared and led. However, this round showed greater evidence of teacher ownership and initiative. Teachers and teams came to the conversation with the data recorded and analyzed and with draft lists and suggestions of next steps. Morgan leadership attributes this shift to the professional learning they have done on growth mindset. In the next data cycle and in planning for interventions, teachers will be using student work and assessment, including EL levels, to inform next steps.

* **Highlight:** Morgan leadership is observing increased willingness and capacity in teacher leadership and facilitation. During this most recent data cycle and reorganization of interventions, Morgan leaders and the STEM director led the work in Grades 6–8, but ILT members led the work and organization in Grades K–5.
* **Highlight:** As interventions and tiered supports have strengthened and improved, year-to-date suspensions at Morgan have decreased. Last school year, there were eight suspensions in February and 66 total for the year by February. This school year, there were two suspensions in February and 36 total for the year by February. Morgan is beginning to see a downward monthly trend in suspensions and continues to make this a focus of its work.

* **Challenge:** Although the time and space are now available for special education and EL teachers to be together to plan and discuss students, Morgan leadership is not satisfied that the planning and practice in the classroom is collaborative and inclusive. With their ILT and in PLCs, Morgan leadership is resetting these expectations and establishing structures so that teaming, planning, and execution of plans are all happening to address the instructional needs of students.

**Priority Area 5:** Enhancing and sustaining family and community engagement.

* **Highlight:** Morgan staff continue to improve outreach to families and build momentum in this area. All Morgan teachers have reached the minimum benchmark of three home visits in the second quarter (18 out of 35 [51%] exceeded that). There was an increase in family participation in school-sponsored events, from 169 families (44%) in quarter 1 to 195 families (50%) in quarter 2. As Morgan administrators completed mid-year formative evaluations with teachers, they noted an increase in proficiency in Standard 3 (Family and Community Engagement) on the Teaching and Learning rubric.
* **Highlight:** One of the Morgan parents who reluctantly began working in the school as a parent volunteer at the start of the year was promoted to school promoter, a role in the Family and Community Engagement Department, in November. The school promoter supports families to build and strengthen their relationship with our school, access information and resources, and develop their leadership and voice as parents. Morgan leadership is very proud of this model of authentically involving parents and community members in the real work of the school.
* **Highlight:** Morgan teachers in PK–5 have worked to plan events during the regular instructional day so that families can observe school in action and see authentic student work and grade-level demand. These events include “100 days of school” and holiday celebrations; author celebrations, which include students sharing a specific writing assignment; and demonstrations for helping students at home.
* **Challenge:** The promotion of the parent volunteer mentioned above left a parent vacancy on the School Site Council that Morgan leaders have thus far been unable to fill. Recruiting and outreach efforts continue.