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| DESE LOGO | | |
|  | Advisory Councils to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education: Annual Reports for 2023-2024 | |
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| October 2024 | |
| 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 | |
| dese logo  This document was compiled by the  Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  Russell D. Johnston, Acting Commissioner  The reports and recommendations are those of the councils and not of the Department.  Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Members, 2023-2024  Ms. Katherine Craven, Chair, Brookline  Mr. Matt Hills, Vice-Chair, Newton  Dr. Ericka Fisher, Worcester  Ms. Ela Gardiner, Wellesley, Student Member  Ms. Farzana Mohamed, Newton  Mr. Michael Moriarty, Holyoke  Ms. Dálida Rocha, Worcester  Mr. Paymon Rouhanifard, Brookline  Ms. Mary Ann Stewart, Lexington  Dr. Patrick A. Tutwiler, Secretary of Education, Andover  Dr. Martin West, Newton    Russell D. Johnston, Acting Commissioner  Secretary to the Board  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  State Seal of Massachusetts | |

October 2024

Dear Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education,

Enclosed please find the 2023-2024 Advisory Councils’ Annual Reports to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Advisory councils, established by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15, Section 1G, advise the Commissioner and the Board on matters pertinent to Department’s educational vision and strategic objectives.

There are currently 13 advisory councils: Adult Basic Education, Arts Education, Braille Literacy, Digital Learning, Educational Personnel, English Language Learners/Bilingual Education, Gifted and Talented Education, Parent and Community Education and Involvement, Racial Imbalance, School and District Accountability and Assistance, and Special Education. This document compiles the reports from the councils. In addition, the State Student Advisory Council, whose members are elected by other students rather than appointed by the Board, is an active and important advisory council to the Board.

Each council’s annual report, submitted by the council chair, includes a summary of the work of the council, recommendations to the Commissioner and Board, council leadership and membership, and meetings held. The reports and their recommendations are those of the councils and not of the Department.

Thank you to the council members and liaisons for their time, efforts, and constructive feedback. If the Board is interested in greater detail on the activities and recommendations of any council, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Russell D. Johnston

Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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**2023–2024**

Adult Education Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. Introduction**

The FY23-24 Adult Education Advisory Council held four virtual meetings in November, January, March, and June. The purpose of the Adult Education Council (AdEd Council) is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) on matters related to adult education programming, leadership, and rigor. Additionally, the Council aims to provide Access, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) training to the field and increase staff diversity.

**II. 2023-2024 Work of the Council**

This year, the Council addressed several key goals:

1. ADEI Training

2. Student Crises and Waitlists: Several focus groups were held, including students, teachers, directors, and administrators, to address crisis and waitlist concerns, particularly for Ukraine, Afghan, and Haitian students.

3. Council Growth: The Council increased by eight new members, including six corrections professionals, two program directors, and ten adult students. Additionally, ten student ambassadors participated in the last meeting.

4. High School Equivalency (HSE) Costs and Accommodations: HSE costs for students were eliminated, and accommodations for HSE testing were streamlined.

5. Professionalizing the Field: Programs were able to apply for transitioning part-time positions to full-time, and capacity-building initiatives were undertaken.

6. Student Participation: Student Ambassadors were invited to participate in the final Adult Education Council meeting.

**III. Council Recommendations**

1. Continue ADEI Training for all AdEd professionals.

2. Maintain efforts in capacity building.

3. Keep eliminating barriers for adult education students.

4. Foster student participation in Council activities.

5. Support professional development and career pathways for Adult Education professionals.

**IV. Council Details**

**Department Administrator:**

Wyvonne Stevens-Carter, Associate Commissioner, ACLS

**Department Liaisons:**

Toby McGuire, Assistant Director

Michelle Perry, Program Specialist, Council Liaison

**Members of the 2023-2024 Council:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Stacy Randell-Shaheen | Chair, Adult Learning Center-North Shore |
| Ernest Best | MASSAAL |
| David Cedrone | Mass Department of Higher Education |
| Rachel McDonnell | Jobs for the Future |
| Leah Gregory | East Boston Harborside |
| Angela McCabe | Boston PIC |
| Kara O’Donnell-Gavin | MassHIRE Cape and Island WFB |
| Heidi Larson | Education Development Center |
| Lori D’Alleva | Charlestown Adult Education |
| William J. Villineau- | Bristol County Sheriff's Office |
| Michael Gatanio | Springfield Adult Learning Center |
| T. Marie Cropper | Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department |
| Christine Lewis | Special Education Teacher MBTI Practitioner |
| Kenechukwu AbajueUmeh | Chelsea Public Schools |
| Michele Ameno | Action, Inc. |
| Beth Gould | Blue Hills Adult Education- ESOL Program |
| Matthew Herd, | Haitian Multi-Service Center of Catholic Charities |
| Michaun Fowler | HSE instructor |
| Ellen Koretz | Catholic Charities of Boston, Haitian Multi-Service Center |
| Lauren Patten | STCC |
| Kamala Santana | STCC |

Membership is comprised of program directors, teachers, corrections staff, and area workforce board members. Additionally, ten Student Ambassadors were involved.

**Council Meeting Dates: FY23-FY24:**

- 11/17/23 (1:00-3:00 PM)

- 1/19/24 (1:00-3:00 PM)

- 3/15/24 (1:00-3:00 PM)

- 6/7/24 (1:00-3:00 PM)

**2023 – 2024**

Arts Education Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

This year focused on unpacking the Educational Vision from DESE and aligning it with the charge for the Arts Education Advisory Council (AEAC) provided by the Commissioner and priority focus areas identified by the Council. Based on this work, the Council has developed a series of recommended action steps that DESE can take in order to support the implementation of the Educational Vision through Arts Education.

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

Last year, the AEAC was given a charge from the Commissioner. The charge is as follows:

“The council advises the Board and the Commissioner on unmet needs within the state in the arts education of children; proposed initiatives and resources involving arts education; and the implementation of the 2019 Arts Curriculum Framework.”

The charge guided the work of the council as it addressed a variety of action steps, with particular emphasis on the frameworks and supporting materials. This year, with the release of DESE’s new Educational Vision, the Council worked closely with DESE leaders to develop a deep understanding of the vision, and through this work, members of the council unpacked it in detail and aligned it with previously established priority focus areas in Arts Education. These priority areas are as follows:

1. Equity in arts access/programming/implementation
2. Working with special education and English learners in arts classes
3. Arts integration

Based on this work, the council developed a series of recommended action steps for DESE to take in order to implement the Educational Vision through Arts Education.

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the Educational Vision, the AEAC’s priority focus areas, and the charge, The AEAC recommends the following action steps for DESE as they align with the main ideas of the Education Vision:

* **Whole Student:**
* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** provide professionally determined instructional time requirements for scheduling elementary, middle, and high school arts instruction.
  + *AEAC Priority 1*

* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** provide, maintain, and update a set of specialist-adjudicated, content-specific teaching and learning resources related to Whole Student objectives (i.e. culturally responsive teaching practices in the arts, SEL).
  + *AEAC Priority 1, 2, & 3*

* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** work to communicate data related to equity in the arts (i.e. arts course availability, arts course taking data) to a wider audience beyond arts leaders and educators (i.e. building level administrators, superintendents, school committee, community).
  + *AEAC Priority 1*

* **Deeper Learning:**
* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** collect, edit, and update selected samples from past DESE initiatives to reflect the current Arts Curriculum Framework. These would include arts assessments, arts curriculum units, et al.  Make such resources and information available online.
  + *AEAC Priority 1*

* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** provide high quality model lesson/unit plans for interdisciplinary, arts-integrated learning experiences that mutually address and assess aligned arts and non-arts content standards.
  + *AEAC Priority 3*

* **The AEAC** recommends that DESE provide training(s) and/or resources for educational support staff in relation to supporting students in arts classes and rehearsals.
  + *AEAC Priority 2*

* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** provide training(s) focused on building cross-content and interdisciplinary opportunities for deeper student learning through spiraled PK-12 curriculum mapping.
  + *AEAC Priority 3*

* **Diverse and Effective Workforce:**
* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** continue to work with arts educators to develop and share professional learning modules that can be accessed by arts educators in all districts. Particular areas of interest include Teaching Students with Diverse Learning Needs and Arts Integration.
  + *AEAC Priority 1, 2, & 3*

* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** create and share out sample lesson plans, and accommodations and modifications for arts lessons in order to meet the needs of the full spectrum of diverse learners (i.e. special education, EL, et al).
  + *AEAC Priority 2*

* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** conduct research into arts teachers’ access to the arts in their own prek-12 education, in order to better understand what opportunities are being created for future arts educators (i.e. Teach Western Mass program).
  + *AEAC Priority 1*

* **The AEAC recommends that DESE** support and advocate for equitable, collegial PLC time for K-12 arts educators to engage in curriculum writing, collegial sharing and discussion of ideas and samples of student work, and development of common assessments throughout the school year that abides by the standards for professional learning. This work should be horizontal, vertical, and interdisciplinary. Exemplars for successful scheduling of these times in local districts should be included.
  + *AEAC Priority 3*

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Administrator:** Dawn Benski

**Co-Chairs:**

* Lauren Saracino, Assistant Curriculum Director for Fine and Performing Arts, Weymouth Public Schools
* Lynn Souza, Director of Fine Arts, New Bedford Public Schools

**Members of the 2023-2024:**

* Laura Brophy, Performing Arts Teacher, Mansfield Public Schools
* Richard Davies, Art Teacher, Natick Public Schools
* Amy Drago, District-Wide Art Teacher, Wakefield Public Schools
* Priscilla Kane Hellweg, Teaching Artist and CEO, Arts Integration Studio
* Julie Jaron, Director of Visual and Performing Arts, Springfield Public Schools
* Simone Kivett, Art Teacher, Lynn Public Schools
* Craig Langlois, Equity of Learning District Data Coordinator, Pittsfield Public Schools
* Sandra Nicolucci, Associate Professor of Music (Emerita), Boston University
* Katherine Ramsay, Visual Arts Teacher/District-Wide Curriculum Content Leader (Visual Art), Tyngsborough Public Schools
* Lisa Struppa, Visual Arts Teacher, Uxbridge Public Schools
* Avery Wing, Art Teacher, Gateway Regional School District
* Andrea Wivchar, Lead Music Teacher K-8, Chelsea Public Schools

**Council Meeting Dates:**

* October 26, 2023
* November 30, 2023
* January 25, 2024
* March 28, 2024

**2023 – 2024**

Braille Literacy Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Braille Literacy Advisory Council (BrlAC) was established in 1997 by the Massachusetts Department of Education in compliance with provisions of the Braille Literacy Act of 1996. This nine-member council, appointed by the Board of Education, is responsible for developing policies, making recommendations on best practices, and providing technical assistance to parents, educators, administrators, and rehabilitation personnel on how to provide braille literacy services to students and adults who are blind in the Commonwealth.

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

The Braille Literacy Advisory Council held four virtual meetings during the school year 2023-24. Topics discussed:

1. Braille competency test for persons who are certified as a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI)
2. Issues related to accessibility of assessments for students who use braille
3. Strategies to gather information to aid in setting future goals

Business items conducted

1. Review of the BrlAC Charge
2. Membership: current/upcoming vacancies
3. Set agenda items for next year

**Braille competency test for persons who are certified as a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI**)

The Braille Literacy Advisory Council submitted a recommendation in January 2022 for the Commonwealth to adopt the Braille Praxis test for TVI licensure in alignment with the requirements outlined in the Braille Bill of 1996. The Council continued to discuss the proposal while awaiting further updates on its status with the Department.

**Issues related to accessibility of assessments for students who use braille**

In October the Council met with Robert Pelychaty to discuss the recommendation around a program of training for educational leaders and test administrators to increase the likelihood of compliance and high fidelity of braille accommodations for mandated assessments.

At the January meeting, Robert Pelychaty joined to share training materials and obtain feedback from the Council.

At the March meeting, it was shared that Robert Pelychaty held the accommodations training for schools who service students with visual impairments. Approximately 40 educators and administrators attended. Participant responses indicated that the information provided was very helpful. Several participants asked about how to make sure the braille materials could be ordered and there were questions about resources provided by the AIM library.

**Strategies to gather information to aid in setting future goals**

A small group worked together to meet with groups of Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVIs) to gather information. Three TVI focus groups were held in late January/early February. A total of seventeen TVIs who are currently working with braille learners participated. Teaching experience among the participants ranged from a year up to more than 11 years. Half of the TVIs self-assessed their own braille as basic knowledge and half felt their braille skills were strong.

* TVIs reported that they are primarily using electronic access devices for braille (e.g. notetakers) and using paper braille mostly for math
* TVIs reported that there is a strong misconception among general education classroom teachers that audio access is sufficient for blind students
* TVIs felt that they spend a great deal of time educating others - general ed and other classroom staff on how braille actually promotes literacy
* TVIs felt that one of the biggest barriers to high quality instruction was lack of support from administration
* TVIs noted that administration doesn't support the extended school year instruction - things like the Carroll Center and Perkins summer programs, making it more difficult for students with visual impairments to stay on the same level as their peers.

There was consensus amongst the participants that they want more support in the form of mentoring, collaboration, and professional development on topics that include technology, braille, and “TVI 101”. There was also consensus that they often need support through contact with other TVIs who have experience with similar topics and that the professional development offerings within districts have little or no relevance to the field of vision.

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

No new recommendations were put forth during the 2023-24 school year. The Council continues to work on gathering feedback from TVIs around providing services for children with visual impairments in the Commonwealth.

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Administrator: Martha Daigle**

**Chair:** Wendy L. Buckley (Educator)

**Members of the 2023-2024:**

Kate Crohan (Braille Reader)

Kim Charlson, (Bay State/American Council of the Blind)

Amber Pearcy (Braille Producer)

Katrena Traut Savino (Educator)

Shuai Li (parent)

Jessica Wetzel (Parent)

Joseph Weiss (Braille Reader)

Shara Winton (National Federation of the Blind)

**Council Meeting Dates:**

All meetings were held via Zoom.

October 17, 2023

January 16, 2024

March 19, 2024

June 4, 2024

**2023 – 2024**

Digital Learning Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The 2013 virtual schools legislation ([Chapter 379 of the Acts of 2012, An Act Establishing Commonwealth Virtual Schools](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379)[[1]](#footnote-2)) created the Digital Learning Advisory Council (DLAC) to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education (Commissioner) on:

* The development of policies guiding virtual schools, supplemental online courses, education technology, and other matters related to virtual education.
* The identification of best practices to encourage online education to complement classroom instruction in district schools.
* The assessment of the appropriateness of the fee that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) may retain for the administration of the virtual school program.

The law specifies that the DLAC includes representatives from various statewide education organizations, districts, and schools including virtual schools (i.e., teacher, administrator, parent), higher education, and non-profit and technology companies. The current DLAC includes a broad range of experts who meet these criteria.

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

During the 2023-24 school year, the DLAC spent a significant amount of time and effort advising the Department and the commissioner on how to best support school districts dealing with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a K-12 public education setting.

Over the course of the year, the DLAC defined the following topics pertaining to AI as requiring further study and stakeholder engagement:

1. Develop a common understanding and definition of AI  
2. Better understand what knowledge and skills are needed to appropriately use AI tools   
3. Develop an understanding of the current use of AI and its impact on teaching and learning for various stakeholder groups (Students, Teachers, Parents, Ed Tech Administrators, & District Leaders)  
4. Issues pertaining to student data privacy when using AI tools

The DLAC met four times during the 2023-24 school year. Members were engaged in sharing experiences from the field, surfacing issues, and problem-solving. During the year, the DLAC

received updates from the Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign and the Office of Education Technology.

Furthermore, during the 2023-24 Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School’s application cycle, many DLAC members served as review team experts for the prospectus and final application reviews.

The Department has sought and continues to seek the following statutory members as outlined in the law: a representative of a non-profit organization that conducts research and training related to online education, a secondary school administrator, and a representative from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC).

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

* The DLAC supports DESE's launch of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Task Force to help stakeholders understand the impact of AI on K-12 public education.
* The DLAC sees a need to develop resources about AI applications, impacts, benefits, and drawbacks. The resources could include information about AI's use and misuse in public education, ethical use policies, safety policies, mental health issues, the digital use divide, AI bias, and methods to ensure compliance with FERPA and other data privacy laws.
* The DLAC recommends the development of professional development programs for educators, teachers, administrators, and education technology staff to understand, evaluate, and use AI and associated tools.
* The DLAC recommends a robust stakeholder engagement process to gather examples of AI understanding, appropriate use, and applicability to K-12 schools.  
  The DLAC would like DESE to provide information and support to teachers about how to integrate AI tools into existing teaching practices.

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Administrator:** Alison Bagg, Director of the Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign

**Chair:** Daniel Downs

**Members of the 2023-24 DLAC:**

* Dr. Kate DeMello, Parent Representative of a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School
* Dr. Daniel Downs, Adjunct Professor, Bunker Hill Community College and Northern Essex Community College and Director of Digital Learning, North Reading Public Schools
* Dr. Sarah Haavind, Senior Research Project Manager, The Concord Consortium
* Ms. Cindy Yetman, Vice President American Federation of Teachers MA
* Mr. Jared Perrine, Director of Technology, Narragansett Regional School District
* Mr. Bill Silver, Director of Information Communication and Technology Services, Chelmsford Public Schools
* Ms. Stacy Young, Associate Dean of Instruction, VHS Learning
* Ms. Elizabeth Tripathi, Education Policy Specialist, Massachusetts Teachers Association
* Dr. Robert Reilly, School Committee Member, Northern Berkshire Regional Vocational Technical (term ended December 2023)
* Dr. Scott Morrison, Superintendent of Schools, Tri-Town School Union Public Schools
* Ms. Angela T. Burke, Director of Professional Services, Collaborative for Educational Services (term ended September 2023)
* Dr. Anna Nolin, former Superintendent of Natick Public Schools (Stepped down November 2023)

**Council Meeting Dates:**

September 27, 2023; December 20, 2023; March 20, 2024; and June 12, 2024.

**2023 – 2024**

Educational Personnel Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Educational Personnel Advisory Council (EPAC) advises the Commissioner and the Board of Education on issues pertaining to all educational personnel and specifically on policy and programming pertaining to the educator workforce.

During 2023-2024, EPAC members focused on working with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) staff on drafting the new Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Communications and Literacy Skills (CLS2) Framework that went out for public comment at the end of June 2024.

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

At each meeting, EPAC members provided updates on the work at their respective organizations. In addition, DESE staff provided verbal and written updates from the offices of Licensure and Educator Effectiveness, with time allocated for questions and discussion. The council devoted time at each meeting to discuss different components of the CLS2 Framework that led to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education topic and discussion at the May 2024 meeting and inviting public comment.

At our second meeting Deputy Commissioner Russell Johnston joined us to share information about DESE’s Educational Vision and responded to questions from EPAC members.

During our meetings in November 2023 and through May 2024, our CLS2 Framework work included:

* Providing some context and background on the Communications and Literacy Skills (CLST) MTEL and how on the new CLS2 Framework will be the foundation for the revisions to the CLST MTEL.
* Sharing examples of work we would be referencing in the building of the Framework.
* Reviewing the Framework in the various iterations at the second, third and final meeting. A protocol was used for each meeting, including the following:
* Noticings: Something positive in this framework, something that represents progress
* Wonderings: What questions come up for you?
* To what extent is this framework accessible? What terms need further explanation?

EPAC used a Padlet to provide feedback that summarized the group discussion around different prompts. In summary, the discussions, feedback and thoughtful contributions by EPAC members helped shaped the draft [Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Communications and Literacy Skills (CLS2) Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mtel/cls2-framework-draft.pdf). EPAC members will be acknowledged as contributors in the final version CLS2 Framework based on their work during SY2023-24.

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

No recommendations were written.

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Liaison:** Elizabeth C. Losee, Director of Educator Effectiveness Policy

**Chair:** Desiree Ivey, Executive Director, Shady Hill Teacher Training Center

**Members of the 2023-2024 Educational Personnel Advisory Council:**

* Priya Tahiliani, Superintendent, Everett Public Schools, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents
* Ray Lewis, Dean, Worcester State University, Standing Committee on Preparing Educators, Public University System
* Alex Montes McNeil, Human Resources Director, Needham Public Schools, Massachusetts Association of School Personnel Administrators
* Stacy Szczesiul, Associate Dean, UMass-Lowell, Massachusetts Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
* Paul Tritter, Director of Professional Learning, Boston Teachers Union, American Federation of Teachers, MA
* Beth Shevlin Tripathi, Center for Education Policy and Practice, Massachusetts Teachers Association
* Jill Flanders, Elementary Committee Member, Massachusetts School Administrators Association
* Marta Garcia, ESL Teacher, Witchcraft Heights Elementary School, Salem Public Schools, 2022 MA State Teacher of the Year
* Jennifer Hedrington, Peabody Elementary Assistant Principal, Cambridge Public Schools, 2021 MA State Teacher of the Year
* Danubia Camargos Silva, Early Childhood Program Officer, The Boston Foundation, Parent/Family Representative

**2023 – 2024**

English Language/Bilingual Education Advisory Council (ELBAC)

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

This English Language/Bilingual Education Advisory Council (ELBAC) was primarily appointed in spring 2018, with new members joining in the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 school years. For SY 2023-2024, the ELBAC was charged with ***“*developing plans that will support DESE strategic objectives related to the Educational Vision and Office of Language Aquisition’s (OLA) theory of action.**”

**Tasks associated with the charge:**

1. Input and advice on how the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) can support districts and families in cultivating systems to support Multi-language Learners (MLLs) and foster joyful, healthy and supportive learning environment so that MLLs are valued, connected, nourished, and ready to learn
2. Input and advice on promoting deeper learning so that MLLs engage in grade-level work that is real-world, relevant, and interactive
3. Input and advice on developing and sustaining a diverse and culturally responsive workforce and giving MLLs equitable access to effective educators

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

The ELBAC held three meetings, during which we examined the following education topics and conducted the following business items:

* 1. ***Education Topics Examined***
     1. DESE Educational Vision
     2. Educator Pipeline
     3. MA Bilingual Education Landscape
     4. Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Framework for Communication and Literacy MTEL
     5. Newcomer Support
     6. Assessment for ELs with Disabilities
  2. ***Business Items Conducted***
     1. Receipt and review of Open Meeting Law materials
     2. Review of ELBAC charge
     3. Council vacancies

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on our three meetings, the ELBAC makes the following recommendations:

* 1. DESE Educational Vision
     1. Consider how to communicate this vision with families.
     2. When sharing the vision, consider how it conflicts with the emphasis and importance put on high stakes testing such as MCAS and ACCESS. Make it clear that deeper learning is the emphasis over teaching to the test.
  2. Educator Pipeline
     1. Establish long-term and comprehensive strategy for development from paraprofessionals to teachers. This comprehensive strategy needs funding over several years to support district partnerships with institutions of higher education for courses, for release time to complete education requirements, and for mentoring and coaching of future educators.
     2. Establish a cohesive and coherent collaboration between K-12, higher education, and workforce development to support the DESE

communication about entering the education profession through Employment Offices and Area Workforce Investment Boards.

* + 1. Consider how to address housing costs (and cost of living in general) as a barrier for educator diversification (especially in regard to going into teacher preparation programs).
    2. Leverage and resource the University of Massachusetts system to work in partnership with districts to craft educator pipelines that take into consideration local demographics and staffing needs, as well as community resources to support educator development.
  1. MA Bilingual Education Landscape - DESE vision calls for linguistically sustaining practices
     1. Develop a comprehensive strategy that includes K-12 education, Higher Education, Adult Education, and Workforce Investment Boards to address bilingual staffing needs.
     2. Develop a long-term strategy for the pipeline of EL/Bilingual Educators that capitalizes on the educational backgrounds and experiences of multilingual communities within Massachusetts, including residents who have teaching and technical backgrounds in their home countries. Strategy could include collaboration and coordination with local community colleges for English language development.
     3. Develop MTELs in multiple languages or alternative pathways (portfolio or panel review) for licensure for dual language and bilingual education. DESE’s Educational vision promotes linguistically

sustaining practices, yet the assessment requirements of MTEL are English only and continues to be a barrier for the development and staffing of bilingual programs where the language of instruction is other than English.

* + 1. Expand and support educator recruitment and educator development from other countries.
  1. Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Framework for Comm/Lit MTEL
     1. Add criteria (or embed within an existing criteria) about seeking resources to support two-way communication based on the linguistic preference of the families.
     2. Consider how instruction in a content other than English (Dual Language (DL) or Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)) is heavily influenced/bound by linguistic and cultural norms. For example, a sample criterion is "Educators can communicate main ideas and details clearly across multiple formats with considerations made to

accessibility". TBE and DL educators need to be able to communicate effectively within the confines of the language of instruction.

* 1. Newcomer Support
     1. Provide flexible financial support to districts with large increases of newcomers, regardless of whether an emergency shelter is in the district or not.
     2. Consider systemic flexibility in funding for adequate support, such as additional teachers, newcomer family support services (wraparound services, interpretation needs, ESL classes for families, student enrichment opportunities, tutoring for SLIFE students).
     3. Offer professional development to support mainstream content teachers to meet the needs of newcomers.
     4. Consider ways to support more middle school and high school TBE programs to give access to native language instruction for older newcomers.
     5. Identify districts of varying sizes as models in meeting the needs of newcomers. Consider ways districts can support each other in identifying ways to support newcomer students and families (similar to the successful SLIFE Community of Practice).
     6. Identify ways that other DESE departments can engage in the work of supporting newcomer students’ instructional needs.
  2. Assessment for ELs with Disabilities
     1. Consider ways to capture evidence of language advancement outside of a standardized test scenario or ways to capture evidence on expressive and receptive language rather than the four domains.
     2. Provide support to educators with identifying what is effective ESL instruction for students with significant disabilities.
     3. Develop a long-term strategy for the pipeline of EL/Bilingual SPED Educators that capitalizes on the educational backgrounds and experiences of multilingual communities within Massachusetts. (See recommendations under C above.)

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Administrator:**

Allison Balter

**Department Liaison:**

David Valade

**Chairperson:**

*Christine Montecillo Leider, Asst. Prof Applied Linguistics and ESL Licensure Coordinator, UMass-Boston / President, MATSOL*

**Members of the 2023-2024:**

***Monica Abdullah****, Special Education/Vocational Tech Educator, The Center School, Holyoke*

***Anis Abdulle****, Chair of the Board of Directors, African Community and Economic Development of New England (ACEDONE)*

***Meg Burns****, Assoc. Prof TESOL/Bilingual Education, Lesley University*

***Winki Chan****, Director of Education and Family Engagement, The Welcome Project, Somerville*

***Craig Consigl****i, Asst. Superintendent, Milford Public Schools*

***Marilyn Glazer,*** *Director, Intensive English Institute & World Language Institute*

***Monica Gonzalez de Wulff,*** *Board Member of SPARK Kindness*

***Kellie Jones****, Director of Bilingual Education, Brockton Public Schools*

***Meghan Lampert****, Parent, English Learner Teacher*

***Kerri Lamprey****, Director of English Learner Education Burlington Public Schools*

***Christine Montecillo Leider****, Asst. Prof Applied Linguistics and ESL Licensure Coordinator, UMass-Boston / President, MATSOL*

***Heidys Mendez****, Guidance Counselor, Lawrence Public Schools, Lawrence High School*

***Ahmed Noor****, Director of EL Community Outreach, Boston Public Schools*

***Andrea Parker****, Parent, DEI Consultant, Federation for Children with Special Needs, Senior Statewide Family Engagement Specialist*

***Anne M. Roberti,*** *Executive Director of English Language Programs and Community Education, Framingham State University*

***Molly Ross****, Assistant Director of Multilingual Learners and Family Engagement, Randolph Public Schools*

**ELBAC Meeting Dates:**  SY 2023-2024

October 12, 2023

February 07, 2023

May 15, 2024

All meetings were held remotely on Zoom.

**2023 – 2024**

Gifted and Talented Education Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The 2023/2024 Gifted and Talented Education Advisory Council (GTAC) work embraced both a reflection on previous GTAC work and the effort to define who the state’s gifted, talented, and academically advanced students are. As the Council was provided agency in deciding the focus for this year’s charge, the Council determined a conceptual definition of the Commonwealth’s gifted, talented, and academically advanced students was necessary.

It should be noted that Massachusetts is one of five states without a conceptual definition of who these students are. A clear definition is needed for a comprehensive, state-wide understanding of these students and of the best practices to meet their academic and social-emotional needs.

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

The Gifted and Talented Education Advisory Council developed the following multi-year charge for 2023/2024. Phase I is now completed for the 2023/2024 annual report and included in this document. Subsequent phases will be addressed by the Gifted and Talented Education Advisory Council in the upcoming year(s).

* Phase I: 2023-2024: Define giftedness and advanced talent, and the potential to manifest these.
* Phase II: Determine methods to identify students who currently demonstrate giftedness and advanced talent, methods to identify potential and to develop potential talent, and these learners’ academic and social-emotional needs.
* Phase III: Identify and define evidence-based supports and research-based practices and strategies that would facilitate high levels of achievement beyond grade level for gifted students, those with advanced talent, and students who manifest the potential to demonstrate giftedness and advanced talent.
* Phase IV: Identify procedures/methods to document the outcomes of evidence-based supports, research-based practices, and strategies on students’ beyond-grade-level achievement and the development of emerging talent.

Definition, identification, and services related to students who demonstrate giftedness and advanced talent, and related to the development of emerging talent, should occur with a concerted effort toward underserved populations, and concerning learners’ local peer groups relative to age, experience, environment, and social/demographic identities.

Identify methods by which the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) can enact accountability for district-level implementation of identification and service delivery, for students demonstrating giftedness and advanced talent, and related to the development of emerging talent.

Phase 1: Definition (Completed for this annual report)

PreK-12 gifted students and those with advanced talent (hereafter “gifted”) demonstrate high ability and/or high achievement beyond their age cohort or grade-level, or have the potential to manifest these attributes, given equitable opportunities for talent development. They exhibit advanced ability in one or more areas, such as academic, intellectual, artistic, musical, creative, physical, and leadership endeavors. Gifted students have the potential or the ability to learn more complex, abstract, or advanced concepts, and may learn at a faster pace, in comparison with their peers of similar age, backgrounds, and experience, given equitable opportunity and support.

Gifted students exist proportionally in every race, ethnicity, gender, geographic area, and socio-economic level. They may be historically underserved students, including, but not limited to, students who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color, learners with disabilities, multilingual learners, students living in poverty, and diverse relative to gender, gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation. Gifted students represent the full continuum of human neurodivergence, meaning the many different ways in which we experience and interact with the world around us. Gifted students may have high potential or ability in one area, but not in others.

Gifted students’ advanced abilities may be universal or content specific. They may show high motivation, interest, or focus, when compared to children of similar backgrounds, education, age, or grade levels, within one or more areas. Gifted students need to learn in an environment that responds to their unique social and emotional needs.

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council strongly recommends the Commonwealth and DESE adopt the definition of gifted, talented, and academically advanced students as developed by this Council, so there is a common understanding of who these students are and their educational needs.

The Commonwealth has a continuing responsibility to provide appropriate, equitable, and challenging programming for students who could be identified as gifted, talented, and academically advanced.

Over many years, this Council has offered recommendations on addressing the state’s gifted, talented, and academically advanced students’ needs. While progress is being made on the state level, change is slow and access to appropriate academic challenge remains inequitable across the state. As a result, the council makes this year’s 2023/2024 recommendation with a renewed sense of urgency.

The Council hopes DESE and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will develop and mandate systems that ensure that all gifted, talented, and academically advanced students, including the traditionally underserved population of gifted, talented, and academically advanced preK-12 youth, have access to a curriculum that meets their academic and social-emotional needs, and have administrators, instructors, and guidance counselors who acknowledge, support, and advocate for them.

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**DESE Liaison:** Thomas Zorich

**Council Chair:** Donna Potter Astion, Retired – Enrichment and Academically Advanced Specialist, Berkshire Hills Regional Schools

**Council Vice-chair:** Dr. Albert Johnson- Mussad, Education Consultant, Collaborative for Educational Services

**Council Members:**

* Kari Andrade, Director of Teaching and Learning PK-5 and the GATEWAY Director K-12, Barnstable Public Schools
* Dr. Katharina Elbert, Advocate, Massachusetts Association for Gifted Education
* Isha Hassan, Student, Revere Public Schools
* Tyrone Mowatt, Founder, Ed Inquiry
* Courtney Perdios, Parent, Quincy Public Schools
* Magalie Pinney, Parent, Brockton Public Schools
* Juan Rodriguez, Interim Superintendent, Lawerence Public Schools
* Dr. Mary Grace Stewart, Chief Academic Officer, IDEAL4Gifted
* Dr. Heny Taraz, Challenge Lead Teacher, Waltham Public Schools
* Darnell Williams, Senior Administrator of Professional Growth and School Culture, Brockton Public Schools

**2023-2024 Council Meeting Dates:**

* October 19, 2023
* November 16, 2023
* January 18, 2024
* March 21, 2024
* April 25, 2024
* May 16, 2024

**Council Recommended Additional Reading:**

2020-2021 State of the States in Gifted Education Report, National Association for Gifted Children

**2023-2024**

Parent and Community Education and Involvement

**Annual Report**

**I.** **INTRODUCTION**

The Parent and Community Education and Involvement Advisory Council (PCEIAC) advises the Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department/DESE), and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) on matters pertaining to the development of family and community engagement in education. Its function is to help inform and advise the Department on policy issues that relate to the enhancement of the educational opportunities, experiences, and outcomes of Massachusetts students. 

**II.** **2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**    
The Parent and Community Education and Involvement Advisory Council (PCEIAC) held two virtual meetings and one in person meeting during school year 2023-2024.  Topics discussed included:

* Mass Literacy for Families and Communities
* New Individual Educational Plan (IEP)
* Bullying
* Family Engagement
* Review of Mass Literacy for Families and Communities
* Review of Teachers Evaluation Rubric
* Membership: current/upcoming vacancies

**III.** **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on presentations and discussions at our three meetings, the PCEIAC members offered numerous suggestions and recommendations that relate to Department, local school district, and future council work. Examples of these suggestions and recommendations are outlined below:

1. Literacy and Communication:

* Develop a comprehensive communication strategy to regularly update parents on literacy resources and guides available on the Literacy Family website.
* Organize workshops and informational sessions to familiarize parents with the Family & Community Literacy Guide, ensuring they have the tools to support their children's literacy development at home.

* Future Meeting Topics: Create subcommittees to explore each identified topic (MCAS rigor, career tech updates, grants/access, mental health awareness, and mental health resources and training) in depth and report back to the larger council. Schedule expert speakers for future meetings to provide detailed insights and actionable strategies on each of the identified topics.

1. IEP Improvement
2. Enhance Accessibility and Clarity

* Simplify Language**:** Ensure that all IEP documents use clear, straightforward language that is easily understood by families and students. This will help demystify the process and make it more accessible.
* Centralize Family and Student Voices: Involve families and students directly in the revision process to ensure their perspectives and needs are accurately reflected in the IEP. This will promote a sense of ownership and empowerment.

1. Address Bullying Explicitly

* Include Bullying in IEPs**:** Create a dedicated section in the IEP to address and document concerns related to bullying. This will ensure that bullying issues are formally recognized and managed as part of the student’s educational plan.
* Develop Anti-Bullying Strategies: Work with families to develop and implement effective anti-bullying strategies tailored to the student's needs, promoting a safer and more supportive school environment.

1. Foster Continuous Feedback and Engagement:

* Solicit Regular Feedback**:** Establish a systematic approach for collecting ongoing feedback from families about the IEP process and its implementation. This will help identify areas for improvement and ensure that the IEP remains responsive to the student’s evolving needs.
* Facilitate Family Input: Encourage families to actively participate in IEP meetings and decision-making processes. Provide training and resources to help them understand their rights and responsibilities, ensuring their input is meaningful and impactful.

1. Monitor and Adjust Based on Data:

* Use Data to Inform Changes: Regularly collect and analyze data on student outcomes to assess the effectiveness of IEPs. Use this data to make informed adjustments to individual plans and overall, IEP policies.
* Establish Accountability Mechanisms: Develop clear metrics and accountability measures to track the implementation and impact of IEP changes. This will ensure that improvements are sustained, and goals are met.

1. Support Families with Resources and Training:

* Provide Comprehensive Translation Services: Ensure that all IEP documents and communications are available in the family’s preferred language. This will help bridge any language barriers and promote better understanding.
* Offer Training for Families: Conduct workshops and training sessions for families to educate them about the IEP process, their rights, and how to effectively advocate for their children. This will help level the balance of power on IEP teams and foster more collaborative relationships.

1. Recommendations for Bullying Prevention
2. Standardize Bullying Prevention Training and Implementation

* Consistent Training Across Schools/Districts: Implement a standardized bullying prevention training program that all schools and districts must follow. This will ensure that all students receive the same level of protection and support, regardless of where they attend school.
* Establish clear accountability measures to ensure that schools and districts are adhering to bullying prevention policies and procedures. Regular audits and reports should be conducted to monitor compliance and effectiveness.

1. Improve Accessibility and Awareness of Bullying Policies

* Multilingual Information Accessibility: Provide bullying prevention and reporting information in multiple languages to ensure that all families, regardless of their language proficiency, can understand and access the necessary resources and support.
* Transparent Processes: Develop clear and accessible communication channels for families to understand and navigate the bullying reporting and resolution process. This includes easy-to-find information on school websites and regular communication from school administrators.

1. Address Cultural Sensitivity in Discipline

* Cultural Awareness Training: Incorporate cultural sensitivity training for all school staff to better understand and respect cultural differences. This will help prevent mislabeling behaviors that are normal in certain cultures as inappropriate or bullying.
* Inclusive Policies: Review and revise school policies to ensure they are inclusive and respectful of diverse cultural practices. This will create a more welcoming environment for students from different backgrounds.

1. Support Schools in Offering Cost-Effective Training

* Provide state or district-level funding to support schools that cannot afford standard bullying prevention training. This will help ensure that all schools have access to high-quality training program
* Partner with organizations to provide mental health for family’s members and students.
* Advocate for integrating mental health education into the school curriculum, ensuring that students receive ongoing support and resources.
* Ensure all communication with families is accessible, using multiple languages and platforms to reach diverse family populations.
* Professional development for family engagement staff, ensuring they are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support and engage with families.
* Encourage schools to collaborate and share resources for bullying prevention training. This can reduce costs and promote consistency in training quality across different schools and districts.

1. Promote a Culture of Belonging and Safety

* Focus on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Integrate SEL programs into the school curriculum to foster a culture of belonging and support for all students. These programs should emphasize empathy, respect, and positive relationships.
* Proactive Support Services: Ensure that schools have the necessary support services, such as counseling and peer support programs, to proactively address bullying and create a safe environment for all students.

1. Recommendations for MCAS Discussion and Feedback Integration
2. Addressing Barriers for Students with Disabilities and Multilingual Students:

* Advocate for tailored support measures, such as additional tutoring and language assistance, to help these students better prepare for and succeed in MCAS assessments.
* Work with DESE to ensure that MCAS instructions and results are translated into multiple languages to accommodate multilingual families.

1. Improving Turnaround Time for Results:

* Implement a system to expedite the dissemination of MCAS results to families, possibly by leveraging technology for faster processing and communication.
* Provide clear guidelines and support to families on interpreting MCAS results and using the data to address their children's academic needs.

1. Enhancing Parent Involvement in Data Utilization:

* Develop easy-to-understand guides and resources to help parents interpret and use MCAS data to support their children’s learning.
* Organize workshops and webinars focusing on data literacy, equipping parents with the skills to effectively engage with and utilize MCAS data.

1. Key Contributions and Recommendations

* Mental Health Support: Partner with organizations to provide schools with comprehensive mental health resources and training programs.  Advocate for integrating mental health education into the school curriculum, ensuring that students receive ongoing support and resources.
* Family Engagement: Ensure all communication with families is accessible, using multiple languages and platforms to reach diverse family populations. Invest in professional development for family engagement staff, ensuring they are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support and engage with families.

**IV.**  **COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Administrator:**

Rachelle Engler Bennett, Associate Commissioner, Student and Family Support

**Department Liaison:**

Olga M. Lopez, Family Engagement Specialist

**Co-Chairs:**

Adanma Ude, Regional Director New England-Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship

Kathresha Cureton, President Elect Massachusetts Parent-Teacher Association

**Members of the 2023-2024 Advisory Council:**

Terry Alves-Hunter Multicultural Outreach Coordinator, Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL)

Kathleen Brady Parent

Ivelisse Carballo Executive Director CPLAN, Brockton

Jessica Corwin School Committee Member, Sunderland

Audrey Falk Chair, Department of Applied Human Development and Community Studies, Merrimack College

Luisa Fernandez District Parent Coordinator, Fitchburg

Sandra Figueroa Parent Liaison, Revere High School

Kat Johnston Manager of Professional Learning, The Teacher Collaborative

Joselyn Marte Advisor Lawrence Adult Learning Center

Lorette McWilliams Professor School Counseling Department, Assumption University

Adriana Mendes-Sheldon Director of Community Partnerships, Project Bread

Kelly Mittal          Founder, myKidzDay, LLC and Parent

Magda L. Rodriguez Senior Director of National Strategy, Families First

Donalda Silva Family and Community Resource Center Coordinator, Atlantis Charter School

**Council Meeting Dates:**

The council met three times; two meetings were held via Zoom, and one in person.

* Thursday, October 10, 2023 (virtual)
* Thursday, January 23, 2024 (virtual)
* Thursday, May 23, 2024 (in person meeting at DESE in Everett)

**2023 – 2024**

Racial Imbalance Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

"We come then to the question presented: Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other 'tangible' factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does.”

* Chief Justice Earl Warren writing for a Unanimous Supreme Court, Brown v. Topeka Board of Education (1954)

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

The Racial Imbalance Advisory Council (RIAC) is one of 13 public bodies empowered by the State Legislature ([MGL ch. 15,\_§ 1G](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1g)) to advise the Commissioner of Education and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). RIAC's role is to advise on matters pertinent to racial imbalance in schools and districts across the Commonwealth.

Specifically, our charge empowers the Council to:

* assess statewide trends and needs;
* seek public and professional input;
* analyze information regarding racial imbalance;
* advise and make recommendations regarding legislation, regulations, and program guidelines; and,
* provide other programmatic recommendations as necessary to fulfill the goals established by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

RIAC strayed from its course in recent years, becoming more of a diversity council than one focused on its charge to report on racial imbalance in our schools. The former commissioner, DESE Staff, and RIAC members hold joint responsibility for allowing that mission creep.

This year marked a turning point for our council. One in which we returned our focus to the persistence of racial segregation in Massachusetts - a problem for us all, but one with particularly devastating consequences for students of color from underpaid families who are concentrated in schools doubly segregated by race and poverty.

A problem that has long been ignored and allowed to fester, with DESE and BESE neglecting their oversight duties as required by state law ([MGL ch. 71,\_§ 37D](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section37C)) and local districts failing to address racial imbalance within their jurisdiction as also required by state law ([MGL ch. 71,\_§ 37C](file:///C:\Users\CJF\Downloads\MGL%20ch.%2071,_§%2037D)).

We asked tough but fair questions about this lack of compliance and received disheartening answers. And, despite significant obstacles to getting support for data analysis through DESE, the publicly available data we explored revealed clear and heartbreaking differences in the educational outcomes of students in schools largely populated by students of color, particularly Black and Latino students, compared with those largely populated by white students.

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

In comparing intensely segregated white vs. intensely segregated nonwhite schools, our analysis showed wide gaps in educational outcomes across all available measures, including out of school suspensions, chronic absenteeism, high school graduation and college matriculation rates, and test scores.

Within intensely segregated nonwhite schools, there is a consistent pattern of white and Asian students faring better than Black and Latino students, with Latino students consistently suffering the worst outcomes.

The data also revealed an astonishing 48-point gap on the state's Accountability Percentile, which measures overall school performance on a scale from 1 to 99 percent, with intensely segregated white schools ranking at 66.32% compared with intensely segregated nonwhite schools at just 18.72%.

Who are these schools failing?

There are more than 250,000 students at substandard segregated schools in Massachusetts, and 90% of them are Latino or Black.

The data make clear that the harmful effects of racial segregation persist in Massachusetts, and our analysis makes clear that not enough is being done about it at the state or local levels. We present several recommendations to remedy this situation and invite all stakeholders to engage with them.

Among them, we press for more oversight from DESE and BESE, and greater accountability for local districts; better data collection and access to data; set aside funding for integration programs; and legislative and policy changes that we believe will lead to a more integrated system that works for all kids.

[See our full report](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGGUi-BWoY/bUgD9sILXWnkcmbmoepa1Q/view?utm_content=DAGGUi-BWoY&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor#1) to review all 15 of our recommendations.

We also associate ourselves with many of the recommendations in MasslNC's 2022 [Choosing Integration](https://massincmain.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Choosing-Integration-Report.pdf) paper, including developing an inclusive school district designation and providing technical and financial resources to help districts maximize the benefits of integration.

Adopting these recommendations will put Massachusetts on a path toward a more integrated school system with better outcomes for all, perhaps finally achieving the promise of an effort that began in Massachusetts 175 years ago.

Roberts v. City of Boston (1849) considered whether Sarah C. Roberts, a five­ year-old Black girl, should be admitted to a better-resourced all-white public school to which she was denied admission based solely on her race. While the case was unsuccessful, the family's continued efforts led to a Massachusetts ban on segregated schools in 1855 - the first such law in the United States.

Our report being issued in 2024 is also notable as it coincides with both the 70th anniversary of the Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision ordering the desegregation of public schools, as well as the 50th Anniversary of Judge Arthur Garrity's decision ordering the desegregation of Boston schools.

That the Garrity decision was necessary 20 years after Brown, and that our report is necessary 50 years after Garrity, clearly demonstrates the stubborn persistence of racial segregation in our neighborhoods and schools. But, while school segregation - especially double segregation - is clearly an intractable problem, RIAC believes that with the right leadership and appropriate attention, it is a problem that can be solved.

Past governors, state legislators, local electeds, and education secretaries, commissioners, and board members have failed to understand or confront the available evidence, even as calls to address the crisis of school segregation in Massachusetts have grown. Now is the time for local and statewide leaders to step up and take meaningful action to address this issue head on.

Of note: We asked to review past Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reports on the impact of racial segregation within and between districts in Massachusetts. We were told by DESE staff that none existed.

Our 2024 report is a first step in changing that.

As part of, and sometimes aside from, our extensive work in understanding the condition of segregation in our schools, RIAC also reviewed, learned from, and provided feedback on several DESE initiatives and external reports.

Among them:

* [DESE's Educational Vision & Catalog of Aligned Supports](file:///C:\Users\CJF\Downloads\•%09DESE's%20Educational%20Vision%20&%20Catalog%20of%20Aligned%20Supports)
* [District Standards & Indicators](https://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/district-review/district-standards-indicators.pdf) (new standards coming soon)
* Building a Blueprint for METCO
* [The lmpacts of the METCO Program](https://media.wbur.org/wp/2024/01/TBF_METCO_1_16_2024.pdf)
* [Who Becomes a Teacher? Racial Diversity in the K-12 to Teacher Pipeline](https://www.hks.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Taubman/RIGB/Policy%20Brief%20-%20Racial%20Diversity%20in%20Teacher%20Pipeline%20-%20Feb%202023.pdf)
* [Global Greater Boston](https://www.bostonindicators.org/reports/report-detail-pages/global-greater-boston)
* [Rising Number, Unmet Needs](https://annenberg.brown.edu/sites/default/files/Rising%20Numbers%20Unmet%20Needs.pdf)

We found that engaging with these documents and the people who presented them deepened our understanding of our educational system, the inequities inherent in that system, and the potential pathways to progress. We look forward to continuing engaging with DESE and external partners in this way.

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

-James Baldwin (1962)

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Council Chair:** Raul Fernandez, Ed.D., Senior Lecturer of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies at Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development

**Council Members:**

* Matt Brunell, J.D., Co-Executive Director of Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership (SEZP)
* Lateefah Franck, M.Ed., Director of Equity, Integration, and Community Partnerships, Westwood Public Schools
* Renée Heywood, Ph.D., CEO/Founder of Real Talk Leadership
* Julia Jarquin, Student, Wellesley Public Schools
* Lamikco T. Magee, M.Ed.,J.D., Ph.D., Dean, Amherst Regional Public Schools
* Laurie Hunter, M.Ed., Ed.D., Superintendent, Concord Public Schools and Concord Carlilse Regional School District
* Marieme Ngom, Student, Framingham Public Schools
* Darlene Spencer, Program Office, Charney Family Charitable Foundation

**DESE Representative:** Sylvia Lam

**2023-2024 Council Meeting Dates:**

* Monday, October 2, 2023
* Friday, November 3, 2023
* Monday, December 4, 2024
* Monday, February 5, 2024
* Monday, March 4, 2024
* Tuesday, April 2, 2024
* Monday, May 6, 2024
* Tuesday, June 4, 2024

**Acknowledgements:**

Thanks to Kelly Harrington of Boston Indicators and Dr. Ann Mantil of the Annenberg Institute for helping us understand how immigration has impacted racial balance in our neighborhoods and schools.

Thanks to Dr. Elizabeth Setren of Tufts University for helping us understand the long-term impacts of the METCO program.

Thanks to Kim Bridgeo for helping us make sense of the mountain of data presented to us.

And, thanks to Dr. Jack Schneider of UMass Amherst whose important research and engagement with our Council helped set us on this path.

Visit [bit.lY/RIAC24](https://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/councils/racial.html) for full titles of RIAC members and related resources.

We thank DESE staff, our colleagues, families, and members of the public for their contributions to this report.

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**2023 – 2024**

School and District Accountability and Assistance Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The 15-member Advisory Council on School and District Accountability and Assistance (AAAC) advises the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on matters pertaining to the development and implementation of the Commonwealth’s District and School Accountability and Assistance system. To accomplish that goal, the Council reviews and advises the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) and Board on their accountability, assistance, and intervention policies and practices.

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

Overview:

The work of the Council centered around long- and short-term changes to the state’s district and school accountability system; the Center for School and District Partnership’s prioritization of schools identified as requiring assistance through the state’s accountability system; and updates to the District Standards and Indicators, the framework for district reviews conducted by the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring.

Activities:

Discussion topics included:

* The Department’s Educational Vision
* District and school accountability system
  + A review of the 2023 MCAS and accountability results
  + Potential changes to the accountability system for 2024 reporting
  + Accountability system review process
* District and school assistance
  + Prioritization of schools that require assistance
* District reviews
  + Updates to the Department’s District Standards and Indicators

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council offered specific input on the topics outlined above. Summaries and recommendations (where applicable) included the following:

* **Educational Vision:** The Council was provided an overview of the Department’s Educational Vision during the first meeting of the school year. The purpose of this overview was to ground the Council’s current and future discussions in the agency-wide vision, and prompt members to think about how their conversations and recommendations might center the needs of students from historically underserved groups and communities.
* **District and School Accountability System:** The Council provided feedback regarding potential changes to the accountability system for 2024 reporting, including the number of years of data used in the 2024 accountability calculations and the weighting of chronic absenteeism and other indicators. Council members supported the idea of including additional years of data in annual determinations but encouraged the Department to further consider the underlying causes of student absenteeism. The Council also received updates on the Department’s early efforts to revise the accountability system and the respective roles of the Council and the external advisory group tasked with making recommendations about potential improvements to the system.
* **District and School Assistance:** The Council discussed the types of support that the Department’s Center for District and School Partnership offers to districts with schools identified as requiring assistance or intervention through the state’s accountability system. Council members suggested ways in which the Department can monitor the effects of its efforts and the degree to which interventions lead to sustainable improvement. Specifically, they encouraged the Department to track and analyze the types of supports provided alongside aggregated and disaggregated school and student performance and outcome data.
* **District Reviews:** The Council discussed proposed revisions to the Department’s District Standards and Indicators document, which serves as the framework for the district reviews conducted by the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring in accordance with state law. The Council offered feedback about the draft, speaking to the depth and breadth of the revised indicators. They shared comments about its use in the district review process, as well as other avenues through which the Department might consider sharing the comprehensive tool. Specifically, they suggested that the framework could be shared with new superintendents and other district leaders as part of their onboarding and that the Department should collaborate with the superintendent and school committee associations to improve the document’s visibility.

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Administrators:**

* Dr. Charmie Curry, Associate Commissioner, Statewide System of Support
* Erica Gonzales, Associate Commissioner, Data and Accountability

**Co-Chairs:**

* Heidi Driscoll, Assistant Superintendent, Scituate Public Schools
* Tim Piwowar, Superintendent, Westwood Public Schools

**Members:**

* Noah Berger, Director of the Center for Education Policy and Practice, Massachusetts Teachers Association
* Tamatha Bibbo, Principal, Pollard Middle School, Needham Public Schools
* Bill Cameron, School Committee Member, Pittsfield Public Schools
* Erin Cooley, Massachusetts Policy Director, Democrats for Education Reform
* Kerry Donahue, Education Consultant
* Heidi Driscoll, Assistant Superintendent, Scituate Public Schools
* Barish Icin, Chief Executive Officer, Pioneer Charter School of Science
* Brandi Kwong, Superintendent, Methuen Public Schools
* Ed Lambert, Executive Director, Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education
* Glen McKay, Principal, J. Turner Hood Elementary School, North Reading Public Schools
* Andrew O’Leary, Interim Superintendent, New Bedford Public Schools
* Tim Piwowar, Superintendent, Westwood Public Schools
* Yves Salomon-Fernández, President, Urban College of Boston
* Marc Smith, Superintendent, Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District

**Council Meeting Dates:**

* October 4, 2023 (virtual meeting)
* December 6, 2023 (virtual meeting)
* April 10, 2024 (in-person meeting)
* June 12, 2024 (virtual meeting).

**2023 – 2024**

Special Education State Advisory Panel and Special Education Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Special Education State Advisory Panel (Panel) and Special Education Advisory Council (Council), under state and federal law, is organized to provide policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in Massachusetts. The Panel offers the opportunity for discussions between parents, educators, and state leaders on special education topics that affect students and families in Massachusetts. Its existence, mission, and composition continue to be governed by federal and state laws. The Panel members:

* Advise on unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities
* Comment publicly on proposed rules and regulations involving special education
* Advise on evaluating services and developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports; and
* Advise in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities. (34 C.F.R. § 300.169.

**II. 2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

During the 2023-2024 the council engaged in the following areas:

* Opportunity for public comment participation at each council/panel meeting.
* Updates from DESE staff on ongoing DESE Special Education work and priorities.
* Indicator 7 (Preschool outcomes for students with IEPs) discussion and updates.
* New Individual Educational Plan updates
  + DESE engaged membership in new form review and additional input from membership via breakout sessions during meeting
* Membership participated in the review and discussion of updated procedures as part of DESE’s continuous efforts to improve its system of General Supervision under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
  + Russell Johnston, Deputy Commissioner and State Director of Special Education facilitated the discussion
* Addition of the Technical Assistance for the Excellence in special Education (TAESE) Team for council/panel support. The TAESE team engaged and facilitated the following activities:
  + Orientation to Special Education Advisory Council roles and responsibilities
  + Priority Setting

**III. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council envisions schools that embrace the full humanities and identities of our students and families and are a reflection of the communities they serve. Schools will identify, nurture, and cultivate students’ innate talents, while addressing needs resulting from their disabilities so that students with disabilities achieve and thrive in their education. To move toward more equitable and just educational systems, the Council is committed to the removal of systemic barriers and puts forth the following priorities:

* Resources to support teams student-centered decisions (Related Council Priority: Student-Centered Instruction)
* Recruitment, retention and support/ Workforce (Related Council Priority: Building a Dynamic Multi-Cultural Workforce)
* Mental Health /Social Emotional (Related Council Priority: Safe and Inclusive School Communities) Identity-affirming, socially inclusive, and student-centered practices
* Racial economic and cultural inequity (Related Council Priority: Safe and Inclusive School Communities) Identity-affirming, socially inclusive, and student-centered practices
* General and special education collaboration to support educational accountability (Related Council Priority: Student-Centered Instruction)
* Accountability Monitoring and Data Collection on New and clarified initiatives
* Create a Culture of Family and School Engagement
* Comprehensive Evidence-Based Literacy Framework
* Data in Special Education Processes

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Administrator:**

**Chair:** Carmen Pimentel

**Secretary**: Edith Bazile

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Special Education Advisory Council** | | | |
| **Member Name** | **Organization** | **Member Name** | **Organization** |
| Carmen Pimentel, *Chair* | Everett | Cynthia Mahoney | Florence |
| Edith Bazile, *Co-Secretary* | Randolph | Susan Rees | MA Urban |
| Kristen Britton | Westborough | Alpha Sanford | MA Urban |
| Ruth Diaz | FCSN | Lisa Sheehy | DPH |
| Beth Doyle | DDS | Janine Solomon | MAC |
| Susan Farrell | Central Mass Collab, MOEC | Jean Spera | ASE |
| Omar Irizarry | DMH | Thomas Stewart | Georgetown |
| Carla Jentz | ASE | Renée Toth | Triton |
| **Special Education Advisory Panel** | | | |
| **Member Name** | **Org** | **Member Name** | **Org** |
| Kate Anderson |  |  |  |
| Elizabeth Becker | MAAPS | Nina Kagan | Person with a disability |
| Paul Bottome | New Bedford PS | Jenny Klein Sosa |  |
| Seetha Burtner |  | Amy LaBarge | Leominster |
| Mary Dennehy-Colorusso | DPH | Lizabeth Lane Morse |  |
| Jennie DunKley | South Easton |  |  |
| Courtney Edman |  | Laurie McCarron | Chelmsford |
| Atiaya Elon |  | James Morrison | DCF |
| Jennifer Fellows- Gardner |  | Sara Nelson | Public Charter Schools |
| Angela Grella |  | Christine Palladino-Downs | Boxford |
| Roxann Harvey |  | Lisa Sirois | DYS |
| Ariella Hellman |  | Shirley Fan-Chan | DESE Homeless Ed |
| Judy Hurlburt | Evergreen Ctr, MAPPS | Andrea Stolar | Chicopee PS |
| TBD | MRC | Shannon Woishnis | Agawam |
|  |  | Theresa Senio | SEIS |

**Council Meeting Dates:**

* December 12, 2023
* January 24, 2024
* February 13, 2024
* April 8, 2024
* June 11, 2024

**2023-2024**

State Student Advisory Council

[**End of Year Report**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2024/2024-06/item2-powerpoint.pptx)

**2023 – 2024**

Career Technical Education

Vocational Technical Education Advisory Council

**Annual Report**

**I.** **INTRODUCTION**

The council advises the Board and the Commissioner on matters related to Career Technical Education (CTE) across the Commonwealth. The focus for this year included: the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century (Perkins V) State Plan; CTE Framework resources; CTE teacher recruitment and licensure including teacher testing; cooperative education and work-based learning; and CTE admissions guidance.

**II.** **2023-2024 WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

The council reviewed, provided feedback, and otherwise advised the Department’s work in the following areas:

* In October 2023, the council reviewed its purpose and norms and welcomed new members. The council discussed DESE’s Educational Vision as an anchor for the council’s work this year, supported by a presentation from Deputy Commissioners Regina Robinson and Russell Johnston. The council received an overview of Perkins V federal law and the procedures for developing the new four-year state plan.
* In January 2024, the council learned about the CTE Framework revision process, received a presentation of the Career-Connected Learning (CCL) Hub, and discussed how to best leverage the CCL Hub to support CTE educators, students and families, and workforce partners. The council also engaged with proposed updates to the Perkins State Plan and provided additional input on the proposals.
* In March 2024, the council received updates on the Perkins State Plan draft and public comment process and engaged with the topic of CTE teacher recruitment and licensure, including teacher testing, supported by presentations from council co-chair Karen Maguire and DESE CCTE Liaison LaToya Tavernier.
* In June 2024, the council received final updates on the submitted Perkins State Plan and began to consider key elements for implementation, including a postsecondary CTE working group and cooperative and work-based learning in secondary CTE. The council also discussed the topic of CTE admissions and equitable access, supported by a presentation of DESE’s CTE Admissions Guidance for schools, federal Methods of Administration (MOA), and DESE CCTE’s MOA review tool.

**III.** **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Council members provided feedback on all initiatives discussed above, which informed the Department’s further development and refinement of those initiatives, as well as next steps. The council played a significant role in informing the Perkins State Plan, provided input that will continue to inform the build-out of the Career-Connected Learning Hub, and collaborated on recommendations for solutions to staffing challenges in the CTE field. The council approached the work with an equity mindset, advocating for systems and policies that support equitable access and outcomes for all CTE learners in the Commonwealth.

**IV. COUNCIL DETAILS**

**Department Administrator:**

Elizabeth Bennett, Associate Commissioner for College, Career and Technical Education

**Department Liaison(s):**

Elizabeth Bennett, Associate Commissioner for College, Career and Technical Education

Nicole Smith, Assistant Director for College, Career and Technical Education

**Co-Chairs:**

Karen Maguire, Superintendent, Tri-County Regional Technical School

Derek Dagesse, Instructor, South Shore Regional Technical High School

**2023-2024 Council Meeting Dates:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Wednesday, October 25, 2023 | Virtual |
| Wednesday, January 10, 2024 | Virtual |
| Wednesday, March 27, 2024 | Virtual |
| Wednesday, June 12, 2024 | Virtual |

**Members of the 2023 – 2024**

**Advisory Council**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| First Name | Last Name | Role | Organization |
| Hunter | Claflin | Recent Graduate | Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School |
| Derek | Dagesse | HVAC Instructor | South Shore Regional Technical High School |
| Laura | Douglas | President | Bristol Community College |
| Lew | Finfer | Senior Advisor | Mass Community Actions |
| Nina | Hackel | Owner | Dream Kitchens |
| Tim | Hathaway | President | Larkin/Hathaway Sheet Metal / HVAC |
| Ernest | Houle | Superintendent | Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District |
| Marvin | Loiseau | Dean of Academic Affairs | Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology |
| Karen | Maguire | Superintendent | Tri-County Regional Technical School |
| Aliyana | Martin | Student | UMass Amherst |
| Kayla | Mathieu | Student | Southeastern Regional Technical High School |
| Akram | Mchiti | Student | Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School |
| LaVonia | Montoute | Director of Career Pathways | EdVestors |
| Judith | Pelletier | Director, Division of Nurse Education | Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School |
| James Tripp | Pockevicius | CTE Director | Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School |
| Jane | Privitera | Application Analyst III, Bank Officer | Enterprise Bank |
| Adele | Sands | Education Liaison | LeftField Project Management |
| Steve | Sharek | Executive Director | MAVA |
| Julie | Spencer-Robinson | Parent | Parent |
| Patricia | Suomala | CTE Director | Worcester High School |
| Priya | Tahiliani | Superintendent | Everett Public Schools |

1. <http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)