Student Opportunity Act Plan

Acton-Boxborough

# Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

*Student subgroups requiring focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life.*

* English learners and former English learners
* Students with disabilities
* Low income/economically disadvantaged students
* African American/Black students
* Hispanic or Latinx students

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

As noted in our strategic plan, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD) iscommitted to ensuring each of our students achieve success in school and after graduation. However, we recognize that not all student groups have experienced the same level of success to date. Based on a review of our district data, our Black and Hispanic/Latino students, students who are ED, students with an IEP, and our students who are ELs, are not experiencing the same outcomes as their peers.

Between 2017-19 MCAS ELA data for Grade 3 indicates that overall, our third graders showed a 19% increase in percent proficient or advanced. If we disaggregate that three-year trend data by subgroup:

* Black Students: cohort too small (< 10)
* Hispanic/Latino Students: 15% increase in students who are proficient or advanced
* Students who are Economically Disadvantaged: 19% increase in students who are proficient or advanced
* Students with IEPs: 26% increase in students who are proficient or advanced
* Students who are ELs: 0% increase in students who are proficient or advanced

Our iReady data from Fall 2020 indicates that overall, 25% of our 3rd grade students scored one or more grade levels below grade three. Disaggregated by subgroup, students scoring below grade level are as follows:

* Black Students: (Grade 1) 81%, (Grade 2) 63%, (Grade 3) 70%
* Hispanic/Latino Students: (Grade 1) 76%, (Grade 2) 62%, (Grade 3) 32%
* Students who are Economically Disadvantaged: (Grade 1) 67%, (Grade 2) 75%, (Grade 3) 71%
* Students with IEPs: (Grade 1) 63%, (Grade 2) 84%, (Grade 3) 65%
* Students who are ELs: (Grade 1) 76%, (Grade 2) 72%, (Grade 3) 70%

Our focus is on implementing research-based early literacy programs in K-3 general education classrooms because research indicates that high-quality classroom instruction can help over 90% of early elementary students read on grade level (Al Otaiba, S., & Foorman, B. (2008). Early Literacy Instruction and Intervention. Community literacy journal, 3(1), 21–37). We are committing to intensive work to close achievement and opportunity gaps for these student subgroups and recognize that this important work will take not just the efforts of district staff, but also our families and community.

**Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps**

***Focus Area 1:***  Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades (E, F, and G)

A high-level summary of the program in FY21 and any expected changes for the following two years: Please see [December 2020 Structured Literacy Presentation to School Committee](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RkB8Oed78Ue6aLiFdQEeFislJEGRsuBq/view?usp=sharing).

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **SEED Workshop and Partner Stipend Fees** | **3,520** | **Professional Development** |
| **2** | **Classroom Libraries** | **12,500** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |
| **3** | **iReady Assessment and Literacy Pro** | **57,000** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |
| **4** | **Fundations and Dyslexia Workshops, Materials** | **19,500** | **Professional Development** |
| **5** | **Decodable Texts, Phonemic Awareness Instructional Materials** | **18,130** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |
| **6** | **Reading Specialists and ELA Curriculum Coordinators/Coaches** | **720,000** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |

**Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

*Outcome metrics that will be used to measure progress in closing gaps for selected student groups.*

* Student Achievement: English language arts (ELA) achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
* Custom District Metric 1: Early Bird Kindergarten Screener Scores
* Custom District Metric 2: iReady Grades 1-3 ELA scores

**Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

*District plans for ensuring that all families, particularly those representing identified student subgroups most in need of support, have access to meaningful engagement regarding their students’ needs.*

We believe that working together with families will best set children up for reading and school success. We have engaged in the following activities to engage families in the area of early literacy:

Family learning series, where parents learned about supporting their child's literacy. Listening sessions with SEPAC families about literacy and dyslexia concerns and questions. Family engagement activities through Title I (regularly seeking parent feedback,

We are fortunate to be partnering for the fourth year with founder & CEO, Joan Kelley of Abound Parenting (formerly "Pup Reading"). This partnership began in PK and has now been expanded to K, 1, 2. As a partner, ABRSD families receive free access to the Abound Parenting app. Joan Kelley designed this app as a former teacher and researcher at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and it encourages families to start quick-but-meaningful daily conversations that build different types of reading skills, including vocabulary and knowledge. It is built around 2-week themes and has book suggestions and specific conversation starters.

Our AB Literacy Site- https://sites.google.com/a/abschools.org/ab-literacy/ is filled with suggestions and resources to support families in reading to and with their children.

First Connections is a local organization that equips families with practical tools, strategies, and connections to other families and the community to foster healthy parenting and guide them through the early years. Our PK-2 Literacy Coordinator, Sharon Ryan, is on their Advisory Board and offers early literacy workshops.

The District has an ongoing partnership with our two local town libraries to foster a love of literacy and reading with families, support students getting library cards, and promoting/supporting literacy events.

We have a few schools that are Title One (Federal grant) that targets grades one and two, as well as the JHS. We provide family outreach through Reading Connections (monthly), parent survey, as well as family engagement events.

Little Free Libraries, as well as literacy nights are two other ways we keep families and schools connected.

The District is in the process of creating grade-specific pamphlets so parents can understand and support structured reading instruction.

**Certifications**

*Certification that stakeholders were engaged in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act.*

As part of the Superintendent's entry process in 2018, the district had an opportunity to engage with a variety of stakeholder groups throughout the community, including our SEPAC and our school committee. Early literacy practices arose as a concern within a subset of the community, specifically among families whose children had been diagnosed or had not received a diagnosis of dyslexia. During the 2019-20 school year SEPAC sponsored a listening session with families of students who had been diagnosed with dyslexia or a reading disability late in elementary school, which the Superintendent and Director of Special Education attended, to hear about the impact late identification had on their children's education. In 2019-20, the District convened a Literacy Committee composed of educators, coordinators and administrators to study research and best practices that would inform the growth of our literacy program and has consulted with multiple experts in the field to develop a framework for an evidence-based approach to structured literacy. The District has engaged in professional learning efforts and has presented the new literacy plan publicly at a school committee meeting for which special notice was provided to the public and over 150 families and members of the public were in attendance.

*Certification that School Committee has voted (or is expected to vote on the district’s Student Opportunity Act Plan.*

DATE OF APPROVAL: 01/21/2021