Student Opportunity Act Plan

Attleboro

# 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
* High Needs students (defined as any student who is economically disadvantaged, has a disability, or is an English learner/former English learner)
* Asian students

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

The Attleboro Public Schools (APS) is characterized as a mini-urban district in Massachusetts. The District is made up of anIntegrated preschool, five elementary schools, three middle schools, a comprehensive high school, a public day program for students with disabilities, and a day and evening academy for overage and under-credited students. Our 6000 students are 67 percent white, 16 percent Hispanic, 7 percent black, 5 percent Asian, and 5 percent multi-race. In addition, 44 percent are high needs, 30 percent are economically disadvantaged, 16 percent are students with disabilities, 14 percent are first language not English, and 5 percent are English language learners. As presented in the data review below and in the selection of our three focus areas, APS should continue to increase targeted support for all subgroups to personalize learning opportunities for all students.

Overall MCAS achievement scores for the past three years in mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) in our subgroups show positive gains and we are classified as making substantial progress toward targets. The growth in both areas also presents a steady increase. By contrast, one school in the District has been identified as in need of focused targeted support for low performance in the Asian subgroup. We have worked closely with DESE supports to develop targeted interventions for all subgroups in the school.

In grades 3-8, MCAS scaled scores in ELA and Mathematics over the past three years have remained flat for our English Learner and special education subgroup. However, the growth for these two subgroups presents small, yet steady, increases demonstrating the need for more targeted interventions and supports. In grade three, overall performance has also remained flat with increased percentages of meeting and exceeding expectations in grade four.

In grade 10, student growth in ELA and mathematics shows an incremental increase for the past three years in most subgroups. One reason for these improvements has been a focus on targeted interventions and supports. In ELA and math, AHS educators have focused on providing academic interventions to students in the lowest-performing quartile and/or at-risk subgroups. These interventions have occurred both during the school day and after school and have been personalized to address the learning gaps of particular students. These interventions are limited, however, due to class size and the availability of educators to deliver individualized supports. To improve upon this work, which shows potential to scale-up for more students, more educators are necessary for in and out of class interventions.

A review of school climate survey results including the VOCAL and MCIEA student surveys, the information presents that the overall instructional environment in the three middle schools and the high school fall within the typical climate range. An area in the instructional environment that was noted as an immediate concern was average class size. Large class size and meeting needs of all students also correlates to the social-emotional needs and well-being of our students as an immediate concern at all three levels. Overall engagement including cultural competence and participation increase from middle school to high school demonstrating the value of the career and technical education programming available in a comprehensive high school.

The following conclusions can be made from the data:

* Flat performance in grade three can be partly attributed to an outdated ELA program. A research-based early literacy program will support student needs in all subgroups with an emphasis on matching reading levels with students at their instructional level.
* Low scaled scores and increased growth for the English language learner and the students with disabilities subgroups are correlated to the number of targeted interventions that can currently be provided with limited personnel and services for students in these subgroups. The ability to hire more personnel for English language learners and students with disabilities will increase targeted supports provided to close achievement gaps.
* The school climate survey indicates a direct connection to class size and the social-emotional health and well-being of all students. Increased personnel to lower class size and increase the availability of social-emotional supports will increase the climate and academic achievement in the instructional environment.
* An increase in the engagement scale from middle school to high school can be attributed in part to the variety of career and technical education programs that are made available as a comprehensive high school.
* As the recent recipient of the Innovation Pathways (IP) grant, we are prepared to develop an Advanced Manufacturing Pathway that will reflect current labor market priorities, increase participation in advanced coursework, and engage students in all subgroups.

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

The Student Opportunity Act (SOA) highlights current APS priorities that we continue to allocate resources to close achievement gaps, expand access to career-technical education programming, and increase personnel and services to support student needs. The Department has identified that APS does not have SOA funds to allocate to these priorities at this time. As a result, APS is not required to submit a budget file to accompany the plan.

We intend to move forward with the following priorities given that the local budget allows for this plan to be implemented in the next three years.

* Implement a research-based early literacy program in kindergarten, grade one, and grade two in all five of our elementary schools.
* Expand access to career-technical education as we increase the programming available to students with the opening of a new comprehensive high school in May of 2022.
* Increase personnel and services to support students in all subgroups.

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

Evidence-based Program #1: Implement a research-based early literacy program in kindergarten, grade one, and grade two in all five of our elementary schools.

Students Impacted: The adoption of the new literacy program will serve approximately 900 grade one and two students in year 1 (SY21) and will approximately serve an additional 450 students in year 2 (SY22). We will support approximately 1400 students with a research-based early literacy program by year 3 (SY23).

Two years ago, the District researched a variety of early literacy programs to replace Reading Street, the current literacy program which was adopted in 2007. During the 2019-2020 school year, approximately 50 teachers in kindergarten through grade six piloted two literacy programs. After analyzing student data, actively collecting and reviewing teacher input, and reviewing the information presented on CuRATE, it was determined that we will be adopting Being a Reader, Being a Writer, and Making Meaning from the Center for Collaborative Classroom for kindergarten through grade two.

In year 1 (SY21) APS will implement the program in grades one and two at all five elementary schools (Hill-Roberts, Hyman Fine, Thacher, Studley, Willett).

* This spring, virtual meetings with professional development providers from the Center for Collaborative Classroom will be scheduled to orient teachers to the materials and prepare for implementation.
* All grade one and two teachers will be provided the materials this spring to prepare and plan to implement the new program in the fall of 2020.
* All grade one and two teachers will be provided professional development in the program on August 27th and November 3rd with professional development providers from the Center for Collaborative Classroom.
* Time will be allocated during common planning meetings to answer questions, clarify processes, and discuss best practices for implementation.
* Building administration and instructional coaches in each school will be available to coordinate specific building-level needs and supports.
* Grade level data meetings will be held to review student growth, monitor reading progress, and make adjustments to instructional reading practices.
* All grade one and two Title I reading teachers, and ESL teachers will be provided with materials to provide small-group targeted interventions to ensure access for all students.
* Adjustments to the plan will be made to adhere to social distancing guidelines in schools, and financial implications at the state and local level due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In year 2, the same implementation process for kindergarten will be followed as listed above at all five elementary schools. We will also include professional development in the implementation of Systematic Instruction of Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words (SIPPS) to support students who need significant targeted instruction.

In year 3, we will refine our practice and continue to support new hires with professional development to successfully implement the program.

## Focus Area 2: Expanded access to career-technical education, including "After Dark" district-vocational partnerships and innovation pathways reflecting local labor market priorities (I)

Evidence-based Program #2: Expand access to career-technical education as we increase the programming available to students with the opening of a new comprehensive high school in May of 2022.

Students Impacted: APS understands the benefits of Career and Technical Education (CTE), therefore, all Grade 9 students transition through all CTE programs during "Technical Exploratory" which last two-trimesters. Students then apply to programs to begin immersion in Level 1 (sophomores). Approximately 450 Grade 9 students are in Technical Exploratory annually.

Then as students progress onto Level 1 (sophomores), Level 2 (juniors), and Level 3 (seniors), each class has a capacity of 20 students.

Upon completing the three-year training process, students graduating from AHS's CTE departments have the ability to obtain several third-party credentials to display competence. Credentials include/will include OSHA, Serve-Safe, EPA 608 license, Mass Oil Burner Service License, and Bank Teller Certification.

Upon graduation, students from CTE programs at AHS have the potential to utilize earned articulated credit at postsecondary institutions both in and out of Massachusetts. All 15 Massachusetts Community Colleges and Chapter 74 approved Secondary Career/Vocational Technical High Schools across the Commonwealth, working as part of a statewide articulation task force have established agreements in 14 CTE areas. Areas specific to AHS are Transportation, Manufacturing, Business Technology, HVAC, Culinary Arts, Early Education and Care, Arts & Communication, and Information Services.

Two years ago, the city of Attleboro said "yes" to fund the building of a new high school. We are fortunate to include six new CTE programs in the new building including HVAC, Cosmetology, Robotics, Radio and Television Broadcasting, Marketing, and Dental Assisting. As a District, we will continue to build our CTE programs as District funds become available. APS has an aggressive plan to increase capacity and programming in order to meet student and workforce demands. The timeline is below:

FY20 FY21 FY22 FY23 FY24

Robotics Exploratory Exploratory Exploratory Exploratory Exploratory

Level 1 Level 1 Level 1 Level 1

Level 2 Level 2 Level 2

Level 3 Level 3

Marketing Exploratory Exploratory Exploratory Exploratory

Level 1 Level 1 Level 1

Level 2 Level 2

Level 3

Radio & TV Exploratory Exploratory Level 1 Level 1

Level 2

Dental Exploratory Exploratory

Level 1 Level 1

Level 2

Cosmetology Exploratory Exploratory

Level 1 Level 1

Level 2

HVAC Exploratory Exploratory

Level 1 Level 1

Level 2

Attleboro Public Schools was awarded a Capital Skills Grant totaling $250,000 in order to purchase equipment to start the Robotics program. This current year, Attleboro will be submitting a Capital Skills Grant application in order to purchase equipment for the new HVAC program as well as to improve two existing programs, Engineering and Metal Fabrication and Joining (Welding).

## Focus Area 3: Increased staffing to expand student access to arts, athletics, and enrichment, and strategic scheduling to enable common planning time for teachers (B and D)

Evidence-based Program #3: Increase personnel and services to support students in all subgroups.

Students Impacted: The hiring of personnel to lower class sizes, provide direct targeted instruction and social-emotional support will impact the District as a whole.

As a District, we need to lower class sizes for our teachers to be able to meet the needs of our diverse population. Our teachers continue to deliver quality learning experiences, with class sizes that cannot be sustained. Kindergarten classrooms will be targeted to provide paraprofessional support, and in grades one through four, classroom teachers will be hired to lower class size to promote small group instruction. Middle school class sizes will be targeted to lower class size and increase offerings for special classes within the schedule. As described in the review of the data, targeted support for AHS students falling within the lowest quartile has contributed to increased growth in ELA and mathematics MCAS scores. In order to continue to personalize this instruction and close gaps, more personnel is needed.

Our English Learners and students with special needs subgroups also need increased personnel for small group targeted intervention and instruction to be effective. As presented in the data review, their overall growth demonstrates slow and steady gains, which can increase with more personnel to shelter content and provide direct instruction.

**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
* Student Achievement: Mathematics achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
* Student Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Student Growth: Mathematics mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Additional Indicators: Percentage of 11th and 12th graders completing at least one DESE-identified advanced coursework

**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.*

APS recognizes that family and community engagement are important to our students' success. As the recipient of the Nellie Mae Education Foundation's three-year family and community engagement grant, the District has solicited feedback from all stakeholders through scheduled community conversations and surveys. A summary of the feedback includes a desire for increased communication and a dedicated position to increase the engagement of our families and the community. We recognize that time is required to thoughtfully develop a family-engagement plan in collaboration with our community partners.

**Certifications**

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

APS shared the evidence-based programs outlined in this document for feedback and participation with the organizations outlined:

The Leadership Advisory Board (LAB), which includes equal parts of Attleboro Education Association (AEA) leadership and administration indicated that each priority was aligned to our current goals and District priorities. The AEA also recognized that without immediate SOA funds to allocate to these initiatives, the timeline for implementation was based on the funds available in the local budget.

The steering committee for the Attleboro Be Heard: Community Engagement Coalition for Education provided feedback on the priorities and shared their interest in including dropout prevention programs for post-secondary success.

The local English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) shared their specific interest and support for increased personnel to support their students' needs to increase English proficiency.

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

Date of Approval: 04/27/2020