Student Opportunity Act Plan

Auburn

# 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.*

* Students with disabilities

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

As noted in the District Strategic Plan, we are committed to co-teaching and inclusive practices. This commitment has been demonstrated through the provision of training for teachers and administrators. However, in our examination of recent data, special education students in our District are not performing at expected levels and thus, this group will be the focus of our work over the next three years. Our special education students perform below the state average in nearly all grade levels and content areas. Additionally, we have a very low number of special education students participating in advanced level coursework in comparison to the state average. Suspension rates are also higher for this group of students in comparison to their general education counterparts.

Based on the fact that compared to the state average, we have a low percentage of special education students within our district and given the expertise of our staff and the support of our families and community, we know we can and will close the achievement gap for this group of students.

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

The Auburn Public Schools has made a financial commitment to co-teaching and inclusion over the past 8 years. Substantial teacher training took place to create effective and productive co-teaching teams while also providing teachers with professional development on inclusion strategies and structures that work. This year, we are providing In-depth training to administrators, special education team chairs and guidance counselors so that student placement and schedules are structured to provide students with best possible instruction in the least restrictive environment. This has included the creation, dissemination and training on the Auburn Continuum of Services to ensure consistency in programming between school buildings and grades.

***Focus Area 1:***  Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English learners (D and/or E)

We know that co-teaching and inclusion are proven structures to provide students with disabilities access to rigorous and grade level appropriate content. However, given an influx of new staff, the absence of ongoing training related to co-teaching and inclusion and the fact that administrators were not fully included in the co-teaching training, we feel there is great value in renewed training at all levels. The training must parallel and correlate with the Continuum of Services and frequent discussion and review of systems and student progress must be included. We will also include training in Universal Design for Learning.

Instructional Assistants play an important role in the daily academic, behavioral and social support of students. The Instructional Assistant Institute will be developed in-district by district based professional staff. The Institute will take place on each of the full and half professional development days next school year. The topics will include math concepts, reading concepts, ELA concepts, behavior management, requirements of IEPS, executive functioning, fostering student independence, trauma-informed teaching, de-escalation techniques, data collection and others. We hope to construct the classes in the Institute, much like a college seminar so that this coursework is interesting, meaningful and challenging.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Co-Teaching/Inclusion/UDL training for teachers** | **47096** | **Professional Development** |
| **2** | **Standards Based IEP development and training k-12** | **10,000** | **Professional Development** |
| **3** | **Instructional Assistant Institute Stipends** | **20,000** | **Professional Development** |
| **4** | **Stipends for facilitators of the Instructional Assistant Institute** | **3,000** | **Professional Development** |

***Focus Area 2***: Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs (C and/or D)

Access to support for students with social and emotional needs has come to play an increasingly large role in the ability of students to be successful in the school setting. Two programs, BRYT and Strengthening Families show great promise in Auburn and we hope to expand both in the coming years. BRYT provides students with daily access to a small group setting, clinical support and academic support to bridge the student back into the general education classroom. Strengthening Families gives entire families access to school counselors, in a relaxed evening session, who provide small group training and counseling. We will expand the BRYT programming at both Auburn Middle School and Auburn High School to fully staff each program. We will also expand both programs to Swanson Road Intermediate School serving students in grades 3-5.

This school year, we piloted a social emotional screener for all students and the results clearly indicated the need for additional social emotional supports for our students.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Stipends for Strengthening Families at AMS and SWIS** | **13,000** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |
| **2** | **Materials for Strengthening Families** | **6,000** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |
| **3** | **Teachers for BRYT programming** | **140,000** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |
| **4** | **Clinicians for BRYT programming** | **180,000** | **Guidance and Psychological** |

**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 Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Student Growth: Mathematics mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Custom District Metric 1: BESS Universal Screener
* Custom District Metric 2: Family surveys for students in BRYT
* Custom District Metric 3: BRYT data platform for student progress

**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.*

The Director of Pupil Services meets monthly with the Special Education Parent Advisory Council to better understand the needs of our students with special needs. This allows parents to have regular and consistent opportunities to discuss issues related to special education services in the district with the Director of Pupil Services in an environment supported by other parents. Team meetings are a venue where the needs of the students are discussed and the family provides their vision as to the needs of their child. The data for our students with special needs clearly indicates that our students perform below the state average on standardized testing when compared to their peers. Feedback gathered from School Councils at both the elementary and secondary level has shown that further development and sharing of our Continuum of Services along with developing a better understanding and model of co-teaching in the district would be welcomed by families. Special education staff has requested additional training related to both co-teaching and Universal Design for Learning. As we move forward with this funding, we intend to create a survey for our special education families, to continue to deepen our understanding of their needs. The school councils, guidance staff, teachers and families have all recognized and demonstrated concern for the growing social emotional needs of our students. Pilot programs with both BRYT and Strengthening Families show great promise in supporting the needs of our students.

**Certifications**

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

The Auburn Public Schools utilized feedback from the Special Education Parent Advisory Council via regular meetings of the Council and the Director of Pupil Services. Feedback at team meetings was gathered and analyzed. School Councils in each building discussed the continuum of services and the perception of co-teaching and inclusion by families in the district.

Feedback from staff indicated that additional professional development was needed for co-teaching, inclusion and Universal Design for Learning. School based data and feedback from families clearly indicates the need for additional and comprehensive social and emotional support for students. A pilot of the BRYT program at the secondary level provided data demonstrating the success of the program. Feedback from families who participated in Strengthening Families was extremely positive and demonstrates the continued need for this program.

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

Date of Approval: 07/08/2020