Student Opportunity Act Plan

Belchertown

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

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

Based on analysis of MCAS data and district assessments (STAR), the district identified the high needs students as a subgroup requiring focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life.

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

After years of piecing together disconnected responses to declining MCAS achievement scores, we find ourselves in the process of reviewing comprehensive English Language Arts curriculum materials for use in grades K-5. Our work is being facilitated by individuals from the MA DESE's CURATE Project and EdReports.org. Throughout the year, a team of educators and administrators has led the district through the process of reviewing, field testing, evaluating, and ultimately selecting updated ELA curriculum materials for implementation next year (2020-21).

***Focus Area 1:*** Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum (E and F)

We will need specific support not only in the purposeful implementation of a new curriculum but in the best instructional strategies to promote student learning as well. We have very high hopes for the immediate, positive impact of a district-wide, comprehensive ELA curriculum (something that has been absent for several years) but are not so foolish as to believe that materials alone will solve our shortcomings in literacy achievement. Our new core materials will provide the foundation upon which to build an instructional approach that prioritizes the systematic teaching of reading - one that focuses on phonological awareness, word recognition, phonics and decoding, spelling, and syntax. Moreover, we will also need coaching for our school leaders as they seek to recognize high-quality instructional strategies in action, provide resources and support for places where it is not, and ensure the consistent implementation of the materials and the strategies.

The implementation of high-quality, aligned curriculum will impact the following schools: Cold Spring School, Swift River Elementary School, and Chestnut Hill Community School. The newly aligned curriculum will benefit all students but will pay particular attention to our high needs population.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **New Textbooks** | **64,000** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |
| **2** | **Contracted Services** | **5,000** | **Professional Development** |

**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 Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* English Language Proficiency: Progress made by students towards attaining English proficiency (percentage of students meeting annual targets calculated to attain English proficiency in six years).
* Custom District Metric 1: STAR Assessment

**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.*

In order to ensure that all families, particularly those representing student subgroups most in need of support, have access to meaningful engagement regarding their students' needs, the district will regularly communicate with families regarding their child's progress through parent/teacher conferences, IEP meetings, language acquisition meetings, 504 meetings, progress reports, report cards, and regular teacher communication. All communication and documents will be provided in the language requested.

**Certifications**

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

All stakeholders had the opportunity to take part in a survey to assist in how best to prioritize various initiatives aligned with the newly passed Student Opportunity Act.

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

Date of Approval: 03/24/2020