Student Opportunity Act Plan

Cambridge

# 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)
* African American/Black students
* Hispanic or Latinx students

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

Cambridge Public Schools is deeply committed to ensuring all students receive a rigorous, joyful, and culturally responsive education, as is described in our District Plan, and have taken a number of actions in recent years to further center equity and racial equity in all of our continued improvement efforts.

CPS has made great strides in the majority of our District Plan outcome target areas -- demonstrating what can happen when we commit ourselves to deep analysis of outcomes data. Despite strong improvement, our numbers reflect continued disparities between the achievement of students of color, low-income students, immigrant students and students with disabilities, and their peers from other demographic groups. CPS is also committed to its Dynamic Diversity initiative which acknowledges that our current workforce does not reflect the demographics of our student body.

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

Focus Area 1: Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs (C and/or D)

Increase School-Based Social Workers: The District Plan prioritizes the need to address the barriers to learning by supporting the social, emotional and behavioral needs of all students. This requires building the capacity of educators and staff for proactive prevention and well as effective intervention. CPS continues to develop a system of prevention and support for social, emotional and behavioral learning (SEL) that parallels the Multi-Tiered System of Support for academic learning.

Schools have implemented school-wide social emotional and behavioral expectations and strengthened Tier 1 SEL classroom instructional practices and Tier 2 interventions for students as part of the general education program. The increase of 8 school-based and 2 district-based social workers will expand capacity for early intervention and prevention efforts with the goal of decreasing instances of crisis and intervention. Using a tiered allocation approach, each elementary school will have a baseline of 0.5 FTE social workers, with additional allocation for schools with greater needs. The addition of 2.0 FTE social workers at the high school will strengthen multi-tiered practices explicitly devoted to relationship development and growth mindset through research-based restorative practices and counseling support.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Social Workers-Salary & Benefits** | **1144055** | **Guidance and Psychological** |

## Focus Area 2: Early College programs focused primarily on students under-represented in higher education (I)

Expand Early College initiative: Dual enrollment and early college programs provide students with opportunities to experience and complete college level coursework, gain exposure to career opportunities, and earn college credit. Such programs are a proven strategy for increasing enrollment and success in postsecondary education, particularly for low- income students. Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School offers students an opportunity to enroll in college-level coursework afterschool through a partnership with Bunker Hill Community College. Due to a variety of programming and operational barriers, this approach is not yet meeting its potential to serve students' needs. To increase our capacity to provide student access to and success in dual enrollment/early college pathways opportunities, CPS will provide $40,000 to support this expansion. We will measure progress through an increase in traditionally underrepresented students' participation, college-going aspirations, college credit accrual during high school, and postsecondary enrollment, matriculation, persistence, and completion.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Early College** | **40000** | **Other Teaching Services** |

Focus Area 3: Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention (D and/or H)

Project Elevate Partnership with Lesley University: CPS has set an ambitious goal to increase the percentage of teachers of color to 30 percent through enhanced and innovative recruitment and retention efforts. This work is overseen by the Dynamic Diversity Initiative manager. We will continue our efforts to support MTEL prep, employee resource groups (affinity groups), and implement district-wide anti-bias training through the EverFi platform.

CPS's paraprofessional staff includes a significant percentage of people of color. Project Elevate is designed to support CPS paraprofessionals who have completed at least one year of employment in attaining the necessary credentials to advance to teacher positions. It was launched in FY 2019 with a cohort of 10 paraprofessionals and expanded to 12 paraprofessionals in FY 2020. Participating paraprofessionals are currently supported on their pathway to a CPS teaching position through fully paid MTEL prep courses and MTEL exam fees, resume and interviewing skill development support, and priority interviews for open teaching positions. CPS will expand through a partnership with Lesley University to establish an articulated pathway for Project Elevate cohort members to earn a Master's degree in Education as required by DESE for advancement to Professional Educator licensure with CPS support.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Dynamic Diversity Initiative manager** | **141156** | **Administration** |
| **2** | **Lesley University partnership** | **100000** | **Professional Development** |
| **3** | **Other efforts (MTEL prep, affinity groups, EverFi anti-bias training)** | **56000** | **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 Achievement: Mathematics achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
* Additional Indicators: Chronic absenteeism (percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of their days in membership)
* Post-secondary Success: Enrolled in college during the first year after high school
* Custom District Metric 1: Percent of teachers of color: Target: By fall 2020, increase the percentage of teachers of color by seven percentage points to 30%.
* Custom District Metric 2: AP/Honors Enrollment: Target: By fall 2020, increase the percentage of grade 10-12 students enrolled in at least one AP and/or honors course to 89%, increase the number of students taking AP exams to 513 students, and increase the percentage of students receiving a score of 3 or higher on AP exams to 87%.

**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.*

Family and community partnership is one of the five pillars of the District Plan. This year, we expanded the capacity of our family engagement team to added 2 district FTEs as well as expanded hours for our school-based family liaisons. Several initiatives underway to support families of low-income students and students of color include: enhanced coordinated services for families, new approaches to family engagement that prioritize communication to low-income and families of color first, the launch of a new Community Response Center, a strengthened language access capacity and commitment to translation, support for launch of the Families of Color Coalition and an emerging coalition for Latinx families, and regular engagement with the SE-PAC. CPS also continues to expand family programming to support caregivers efforts to support students learning, including through the Tech Goes Home program and the launch of executive functioning support workshops, while planning for the design and launch of a broader Caregiver University. School-based and districtwide liaisons are the backbone to the strategy and we have increased support to them, including through biweekly meetings to provide opportunities to share best practices, problem solve, and conduct professional development. We measure family engagement through surveys and districtwide family listening sessions.

**Certifications**

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

The Cambridge Public Schools scheduled three community meetings for families and staff. Each meeting involved a presentation and small group discussions. In addition, the School Committee conducted several budget workshops for the review of the budget and held public hearings. The district worked to enhance its budget education through the budget development and adoption process through improved presentation materials and additional meetings.

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

Date of Approval: 05/19/2020