Student Opportunity Act Plan

Hampden-Wilbraham

# 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

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

HWRSD is committed to providing all students with opportunities to grow both academically and socially. As indicated through district reporting indicators, HWRSD will concentrate on supporting our students deemed low income and students with disabilities. Based on reviews of district data, students within these subgroups have performed below those of their peers on indicators including academic proficiency and attendance. Students within these subgroups report low engagement, academic performance and an increase in absentee reporting.

Overall, our Economically Disadvantaged (ED) and Students With Disabilities (SWD) students show growth significantly below that of their peer group, especially at the High School level where 2019 Mean SGP was 14 and 9 points below that of All Students in English Language Arts. Graduation Rates are equally challenging where the 4 Year Cohort Graduation Rate is 89.8% for ED Students and 84.4% for SWD versus 95.7% for All Students (AS). While Extended Engagement Rate shows some improvement, both of these subgroups are more than 5 points below their peers. As a logical outcome of these concerns, Advanced High School Coursework Completion stands at 42% for ED and 16% for SWD as compared to 70.5% for All Students.

A major contributor to all of the above outcomes is identified through our Chronic Absenteeism reporting. At the K-8 level, the AS cohort shows only 7.7% Chronic Absenteeism whereas ED shows 21.6% and SWD shows 13.2%. At the High School level, Chronic Absenteeism for AS rises to 9.3%, however these two subgroups rise comparably to 31.0% and 22.4% respectively.

Finally, while our ELL population is not significant enough to warrant reporting in the various accountability categories, there is reason to believe that they present similar challenges to the two groups discussed above. Attendance data shows that ELL students were chronically absent at a 16.7% rate, falling between the other two subgroups. As we believe attendance to be a driver to the other identified metrics above, we intend upon supporting our ELL populations in a similar fashion.

HWRSD's continued commitment to a Tiered Systems of support framework provides an operational blueprint for all dimensions of learning while maintaining essential relationships that stand at the center of our planning efforts.

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

Over the past few years, HWRSD has adopted multiple strategies to help close the identified gaps above and provide targeted support to meet the needs of our ED, SWD populations. We intend to deepen these programs and expand them within the construct of our budget. Some of the added programming we have adopted include the following:

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

Addition of an additional full-time, districtwide ELL Instructor as well as an ELL Coordinator Stipend to support the significant year-to-year variance in our student populations. Additionally, with only 29 total students, they collectively speak 11 separate languages which presents challenges despite the welcome diversity these students bring to our schools. This position was added to the FY21 budget and we intend upon continuing this position into the FY22 budget.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **ELL Teacher (1.0 FTE)** | **63562** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |
| **2** | **ELL Coordinator Stipend** | **4000** | **Other Teaching Services** |

## Focus Area 2: Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention (D and/or H)

Enhancement of the HWRSD Mentoring Program is to support the overall growth of all educators within the district. Hampden- Wilbraham Regional School District is committed to adult and student academic excellence in all aspects of teaching and learning. This program is designed to recruit and retain the highest qualified educators to teach our students. In conjunction with the School Superintendent, our staff, students, community and families will experience the highest level of academic achievement through concentrated efforts in improving our induction and mentoring program. Provide opportunities for new staff to fully embrace and understand the culture and district learning environments. Establish a clear and precise system to effectively support, monitor and train new staff on district policies, expectations and culture of the school district. Provide new teachers with professional support and guidance that will enhance teaching performance and student achievement outcomes.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Mentoring Stipends** | **11900** | **Professional Development** |

Focus Area 3: Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum (E and F)

HWRSD has selected and engaged with IXL as its screening, diagnostic, and analytic tool to guide instruction and assess learning across the district. IXL further provides for various curricular supports and activities to supplement and enhance the instruction provided to students. IXL will be utilized to support response to interventions, conduct needs assessments and referrals to various educational services such as Title I, Special Education, and ELL. Teachers have begun utilizing this program and the district is engaging in professional development to support and raise utilization rates.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Assessment/Testing** | **15500** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |

Focus Area 4: Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum (E and F)

During the course of the COVID pandemic, while in both Hybrid and Remote modes of instruction, HWRSD has ensured that students with severe special education needs as well as pre-k students have access to in-person education four days a week. This has resulted in the need for an additional half day pre-k classroom to be added in the spring to include a 0.5 FTE teacher and 0.5 FTE paraprofessional to support the program. HWRSD has also added a full-time Adjustment Counsellor for what amounts to two-thirds of the year to support social-emotional needs at all levels during this time.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **0.5 FTE Pre-K teacher, Half Year** | **15000** | **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
* Student Achievement: Mathematics achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
* Student Achievement: Science achievement as measured by average scaled scores (or CPI, depending on grade level) on MCAS
* Student Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Student Growth: Mathematics mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* High School Completion: Four-year cohort graduation rate
* High School Completion: Extended engagement rate (5 year cohort grad rate plus percentage of students who are still enrolled)
* High School Completion: Annual dropout rate
* 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).
* Additional Indicators: Chronic absenteeism (percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of their days in membership)
* Custom District Metric 1: IXL Diagnostic Testing
* Custom District Metric 2: Mentoring Goals Forms
* Custom District Metric 3: Daily Attendance Reports
* Custom District Metric 4: Report Cards/Retention

**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.*

While the HWRSD workforce largely mirrors our community and student population, it does not represent the larger word that our students will one day need to identify with. We believe further this lends to the reduced engagement in our targeted populations and students of color. To better understand the needs of our students within these subgroups, the district leadership team including: Superintendent Ganem, school administrators, supervisors / directors, school committee and local stakeholders will participate in 2 two full-day trainings focused on Equity and Diversity. This training is provided by the Anti- Defamation League.

To support the academic needs of students in these subgroups, the district purchased 900 Chromebooks that were distributed to students in early fall. In addition to Chromebooks, the district has provided twelve Verizon hotspots for families in need. To ensure proper communication, The district facilitates zoom conference meetings for parents as well as weekly individual campus parent notifications. Weekly newsletters as well as blackboard messaging outreach messages in both verbal and written form. Documents are translated in multiple languages for the purpose of representing the diverse languages in our district.

**Certifications**

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

Imbedded within multiple community and staff forums throughout the year

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

Date of Approval: 1/21/2021