# Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2023

***Lowell Community Charter Public School***

→ **Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups**

**Which student groups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?**

As detailed in our mission statement and five-year strategic plan, the Lowell Community Charter Public School is committed to academic excellence for all students and sees its diversity as a source of strength. We have experienced relatively high percentile rankings for many of our subgroups as measured by MCAS, including our English Learner, High Needs and African American/Black subgroups.



Our Special Education subgroup trails behind the performance of our general education population and is a core focus of our work. Additionally, our dually-identified ELL and SPED subgroups are at the nucleus of our efforts as a very at-risk sub-population. Despite the stronger EL subgroup MCAS performance, the school did not meet its ACCESS targets as part of the accountability plan. Therefore, the EL subgroup remains a vital piece of our targeted work, both from an EL intervention lens as well as a tier 1 approach as this population comprises fifty percent of our student body. Our 3rd grade cohort consistently struggles relatively to our other grades so we continue to build our early education and early literacy and numeracy programs to support stronger third grade MCAS scores. We remain firmly committed to the work - the hard work - to drive achievement for the most vulnerable of populations and to close the equity gaps that threaten achievement. This is a collective work of our community and is a cornerstone of the goals within our strategic plan and our school’s accountability measures.

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

**What evidence-based programs will your charter school adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will be allocated to these programs?**

Within the past two years, LCCPS has adopted and implemented strategies focused on closing achievement gaps and raising the bar of excellence for all students. The following key initiatives are central to the work and are aligned to the goals within our strategic plan as well as the school’s mission and guiding principles.

**Evidence-based program #1: High Quality Curriculum with Supporting Professional Development and a Strong Assessment Program**

The school continues to revise and build upon its curriculum offerings and program to better serve the needs of our students. Over the past year, especially given the recent remote learning model, the school has focused on its core programs as well as supplemental intervention programs to build standards-based skills. The curriculum team in conjunction with teachers continues to refine its English Language Arts units to target skill gaps, better address the state standards and increase culturally responsive practices. The school will be undergoing a review of its math curriculum this coming year as well as working to construct its early science program. For all of these initiatives, better addressing the needs of our EL and SPED populations is at the forefront of concern. Formative assessment and student engagement tools have been added, especially in our current virtual instruction model, to help drive instruction and pinpoint areas of growth and skill gaps. Online programs such as Lexia and Study Island help to provide important data regarding student progress that is reviewed by both instructional staff and academic leadership. Professional development has focused on and will continue to center on The Skillful Teacher and Kagan Cooperative Learning to drive teaching best practices.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category[[1]](#footnote-1)** |
| Instructional Materials (literacy and math) | $75,000 | Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology |
| Instructional Technology - Lexia, PearDeck, NearPod, Study Island, Seesaw, Raz Plus | $32,399 | Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology |
| Professional Development (Skillful Teacher, Kagan) | $15,000 | Professional Development |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum  |
| **SOA program categories:** | E) Increased or improved professional developmentF) Purchase of curriculum materials and equipment that are aligned with the statewide curriculum frameworks |

**Evidence-based program #2: Continued Development of the Special Education and English Learner Inclusion Model**

For the past two years, LCCPS has continued to build upon its inclusion model, refining its practice and shining a greater light on the inclusion model. LCCPS is focusing on expanding the inclusion opportunities offered at the school. The special education teachers and ancillary service providers are moving toward providing services in the inclusion setting in a more structured and systematic manner. The general education teachers and special education teachers are collaborating to create comprehensive lesson plans that lay out individualized strategies that address the academic, social and behavioral aspect of the learners. The special education office is creating a more solid foundation to write IEP that are standards based by providing training to staff in this topic. The intention is to close the academic gap between students with disabilities and peers. Using the Special Education self-assessment as a guidepost, processes have been reviewed and realigned to the school’s core mission of driving student achievement for all students. Two additional ELL and RTI teachers were added this year to increase the school’s ability to provide intervention services in the early grades and support our EL population. The school has contracted with Schoolrunner to aid in the more effective use of data, including importantly the disaggregation of data by subgroup to help drive goal-planning and interventions targeted for specific subgroups.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| 1 new ELL/SPED para position | $35,000 | Other Teaching Services |
| 2 new ELL/RTI positions | $150,000 | Classroom and Specialist Teachers |
| Schoolrunner and Link It | $25,000 | Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology |
| Inclusion PD and Goalbook | $13,000 | Professional Development |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English learners  |
| **SOA program categories:** |  D) Hiring school personnel that best support improved student performance E) Increased or improved professional development |

**Evidence-based program #3: Staff and Programming to Support Social Emotional Learning and Resilience**

This year, the school is maintaining its focus on our main program areas, Responsive Classroom/Advisory, PEAR Clover Model, Kagan Win-Win, Leader in Me, and The Skillful Teacher. LCCPS continues to review and refine its practice of the daily Morning Meeting and Advisory Models as the expectation across all grades K1-8 even within our virtual environment. We are continuing to partner with PEAR (Partnerships in Education and Resilience) and again implementing their Holistic Student Assessment tool. We are also partnering with PEAR to provide professional development as well as support our counseling team in regards to tier 2 interventions.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Professional Development - PEAR, Leader in Me, Responsive Classroom | $17,500 | Professional Development  |
| PEAR survey  | $1,500 | Pupil Services  |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** |  Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs  |
| **SOA program categories:** | C) Social services to support students’ social-emotional and physical healthD) Hiring school personnel that best support improved student performance |

**Evidence-based program #4: Recruitment, Development and Retention of a World-Class Talent System**

LCCPS is committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce with a teaching staff that mirrors our student population. The school continues to build a robust and competitive salary structure to attract and retain a strong teaching force. Teacher retention is key in improving student outcomes so that our students are being taught by highly qualified, experienced and proficient teachers. LCCPS has instituted a proficiency-based salary structure that rewards teachers at the early stages of their careers for reaching Proficiency on the Massachusetts Teacher Rubric, which helps retain talented teachers on our staff. This has helped the school go from 7% nonwhite teachers to 18% nonwhite teachers in the past three years. The school is partnering with Journey into Education & Teaching(JET) and Mass Partnerships for Diversity in Education (MPDE) to help build a paraprofessional to teacher pipeline to support teacher diversity as well as encouraging career growth.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Proficiency based Salary Structure | $75,000 | Classroom and Specialist Teachers |
| MPDE Membership Dues | $5,000 | Professional Development15 |
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| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention  |
| **SOA program categories:** | D) Hiring school personnel that best support improved student performance H) Diversifying the educator and administrator workforce |

**Evidence-based program #5: Facilities Improvements to Create a Healthier and Safer Learning Environment**

LCCPS is located in a historic mill building in the Hamilton Canal Innovation District of the City of Lowell. LCCPS continues to invest in facility improvements to create and maintain a healthier and safer learning environment for our students. In FY21, LCCPS invested nearly a million dollars in facility upgrades and will continue to invest in its facility moving forward. In FY20, the school prioritized major facility projects to complete during FY2; including exterior brick repair/restoration, new air handler replacement which includes UV germ/virus killing air purification system built in, and launched a feasibility study for potential development of school owned property adjacent to our existing facility. These investments are developed through thoughtful financial planning and ongoing analysis of our facility needs with advice from various stakeholders.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Brick Repair Project- Capital  | $369,000 | Operations and Maintenance |
| Air Handler Replacement- Capital | $544,000 | Operations and Maintenance |
| Facilities Consulting | $80,000 | Operations and Maintenance |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | Facilities improvements to create healthy and safe school environments |
| **SOA program categories:** | J) Any other program determined to be evidence-based by the commissioner |

→ **Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

**What metrics will your charter school use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups? Select from the list of Department metrics or provide your own.**

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| 1. **Department outcome metrics:**
	* English Language Arts achievement
	* Mathematics achievement
	* English Language Proficiency - progress made by students towards attaining English Language proficiency
 |  **2) Custom metrics (must include targets as well):*** + % of homerooms (75% or higher) will meet or exceed ELA Galileo targets
	+ % of homerooms (75% or higher) will meet or exceed Math Galileo targets
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→ **Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

**How will your charter school ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the charter school regarding their students’ needs?**

At LCCPS, we continue our goal of parent partnership in the work of educating the whole child. We invited our parents in through virtual meetings before the school year began to participate in the active listening exercise, allowing teachers to hear from parents what they value in the education of their child and to express their wishes and hopes for the school year. Each Spring a parent survey is disseminated, including translated versions, as an additional way to obtain information from parents in terms of how they see our school and how we can improve our school overall from their perspectives.

Last year we continued to inform and update our families about LCCPS through our monthly Friends of LCCPS Meetings, which included the following topics. Similar topics are being addressed this year, based on parent feedback and the needs of the community.

* Welcome Back Information Night
* Overview of Strategic Plan
* Title I Overview
* Special Education Rights and Responsibilities
* The Decision-Making Process for students.
* Managing Stress and Trauma during COVID-19
* Planning and support for remote learning
* Planning for the reopening of school

This year, the Friends of LCCPS continues to bring in more parents to our meetings as the focus of the meetings had shifted this year to a venue for feedback from parents on important issues, including how the school can serve students during remote learning.

We continue to send out automated texts and calls to families for reminders and important messaging. We have always included the translated materials in Spanish, Khmer, and Portuguese as attachments in emails in efforts to go green. We still send home translated materials when it is necessary or required. During the school closure, there has been an additional focus and attention to our social media presence, particularly Facebook, to help share information as well as connect our community through pictures and posts of events such as virtual assemblies, spirit weeks, and academic projects. Lastly, as a school we continue to work with parents to acquire an email address to ensure that they are receiving school information and that we are communicating with parents in the most effective modality. Our annual Parent Survey continues to show strong positives from our parents and families, in key areas of academic programming, communication, and responsiveness.

**Certifications:**

**X By checking here, I certify that our charter school has engaged stakeholders in our community in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act**

**Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:**

Stakeholders were engaged throughout the evolution of the school’s key goals and focal areas. The school’s Board of Trustees, school leadership, teaching faculty, parents and community members were all integral voices in the development of the five-year strategic plan which is the basis for many of the SOA goals. Parents, through the Friends group, are consistently consulted for feedback on school initiatives and priorities. The accountability plan is reviewed and approved annually by the Board and shared out with the larger school community.

**X By checking here, I certify that the Lowell Community Charter Public School Board of Trustees voted on our Student Opportunity Act Plan.**

**Date of vote: January 19, 2021 Outcome of vote: 8-0 in favor**

1. The foundation categories are: Administration; Instructional Leadership; Classroom & Specialist Teachers; Other Teaching Services; Professional Development; Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology; Guidance and Psychological; Pupil Services; Operations and Maintenance; Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges; and Special Education Tuition. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)