**Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2023**

***New Heights Charter School of Brockton***

**→ Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups  
Which student subgroups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?**

During the summer of 2020, members of the New Heights leadership team sat down to develop our Core Values and two of those values specifically speak to the mission of our inaugural Student Opportunity Plan, “Unwavering Belief in the Ability of Every Student as an Early College Scholar” and; “Respect for Diversity and Commitment to Social Justice”, these two values, coupled with our Board’s Strategic Vision for our first charter term, drive our commitment to expanding opportunities for all four student subgroups through a focus first on deepening our early college programming to increase the number of students underrepresented in higher education. Nearly 50% of our graduating seniors will earn a college degree this spring and the remaining 50% will earn at minimum 12 college credits. Our focus is to support all of these students, but particularly those who fall short of the Associates Degree. Our answer is targeted student support. Our staffing over our first charter term is not representative of the students and families we serve. Along with the implementation of a schoolwide Culturally Responsive Curriculum and enhancement to our professional development, it is clear that New Heights must recruit a more diverse and representative staff as well as invest in the development of these new staff members during their time with our school. Despite nearly 99% of our students identifying as students of color, New Heights only employed 21 staff members of color compared to 51 white staff members. This disparity in staff representation will be addressed by focusing on talent development.

**→ Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps  
What evidence-based programs will your district adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will you allocate to these programs?**

**1. Early College programs focused primarily on students underrepresented in higher education: Targeted Student Support.** During our first five years, New Heights used professional teachers to join our students in their college courses. Our teachers, including ESL, special education, and content specialists, provide additional support to our students when they return to high school. Building on this model, early college students will attend “College Companion Courses” (CCC), which will include curriculum developed by trained content specialists including special education and ESL. The CCC curriculum will include backward design of all college syllabi These companion courses, and the curriculum developed through backward design, will enhance the learning experience of all student subgroups and, we believe, dramatically increase their ability to succeed in the course.

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| FY21 budget item | Amount | Foundation Category[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| Professional Development | 20,000 | Professional Development |
| Instructional materials | 40,000 | Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology |
| Companion Course Teachers | 550,000 | Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Employee Benefits / Fixed Charges |
| Evidence-based program identified by the Department: | | Early College programs focused primarily on students under-represented in higher education |
| SOA program categories: | | Developing additional pathways to strengthen college and career readiness (I) |

2. **Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention**

Our families and current staff reported a need to begin focusing our energies on talent development, particularly on diversifying our staff to better represent our student body, as well as expanding our curriculum to include culturally responsive texts. During the tenure of this Student Opportunity Plan and into the future, New Heights will focus on High Impact Teaching and Learning through the creation of a schoolwide Culturally Responsive Curriculum which will contribute to the retention and recruitment of highly qualified teachers that better represent the culturally, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of our student population.

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| FY21 budget item | Amount | Foundation Category |
| Culturally Responsive PD | 40,000 | Professional Development |
| Culturally Responsive Curriculum Consultants | 50,000 | Instructional Leadership |
| Instructional support materials | 40,000 | Instructional Materials |
| Evidence-based program identified by the Department: | | Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention |
| SOA program categories: | | Hiring school personnel that best support improved student performance (D)  Diversifying the educator and administrator workforce (H) |

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

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

**1) DESE outcome metrics:**

* First semester college matriculation rate
* Third semester college persistence rate
* Percentage of 11th and 12th graders completing advanced coursework

**2) Custom district metrics:**

* Student engagement (measured by annual district-wide student climate survey)
* College course completion rates by subgroup
* Staff engagement (measured by annual district-wide staff climate survey)
* Staff demographics (as reflected in annual teacher composition in DESE School Profiles)

→ **Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

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

During the spring of 2020, New Heights began holding school wide zoom sessions to discuss topics ranging from school climate, to Covid, to health and wellness and technology usage. Prior to Covid-related closures, New Heights held annual Multicultural Nights, weekly “Family Meetings”, weekly “College Knowledge Nights”, we conducted bi-annual climate surveys, monthly PAC meetings to ensure we are engaging with the parents of our special education and ESL populations, family support meetings conducted by our counseling staff, and conducted focus groups with families to both hear their thoughts and concerns as well as share information, such as our annual report and the draft of this Student Opportunity Plan. Our focus on increasing college completion for all four student subgroups will not succeed unless we also focus on finding more solutions to working with our families. We intend to hire more bilingual staff to better communicate with families and our website will see a redesign for the 2021-22 school year, making our web presence more accessible. In addition, we will hold more informal zoom sessions, which addresses childcare and travel concerns raised by families who were unable to attend our face-to-face meetings of years past. Finally, we will develop a Family Resource Center that will send out monthly newsletters and serve as a hub for all “family” information.

**Certifications:**

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

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

New Heights began working on stakeholder engagement during the spring of 2020, where we partnered with Slowey McManus, a communication agency, to begin improving our print materials. These materials were vetted by various stakeholders during focus groups. The result was promotionally materials that reflected our entire school community. Starting this summer, in order to keep families informed of fast-moving opening and closing procedures, the Executive Director started holding weekly Monday Night Meetings that often expanded to address real-time parent concerns and questions, for example the Black Lives Matter movement, which resulted in members of our Board moderating small group zoom sessions. There were two consistent themes raised in every meeting: New Heights needs to create more opportunities for ALL students to complete college coursework by providing more support and stakeholders consistently requested a more diverse curriculum and staff to better reflect our community.

X **By checking here, I certify that our district’s school committee voted on our Student Opportunity Plan.**

• **Date of vote: 1/14/2021 Outcome of vote: Approved Unanimously**

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)