Student Opportunity Act Plan

Northampton

# 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
* Hispanic or Latinx students

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

Based on a review of our district data, our Latino students and English learners are not experiencing the same level of MCAS outcomes and graduation rates as their peers. Additionally, our educator workforce does not mirror our student population: Just 8 percent of our educators are of color, compared to 29 percent of our students. We are committing to intensive work to close achievement and opportunity gaps for these student subgroups and recognize that this important work will take not just the efforts of district staff, but also our families and community.

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

## Focus Area 1: Expanded access to full-day, high-quality pre-kindergarten for 4-year-olds, including potential collaboration with other local providers (D, F, and G)

Continue to administer PEG grant to expand access to full-day high-quality pre-kindergarten both in the public schools and in private settings.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Nurse** | **$52,000** | **Pupil Services** |
| **2** | **Preschool Teachers** | **$299,178** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |
| **3** | **Preschool ESPs** | **$286,512** | **Other Teaching Services** |
| **4** | **Preschool Therapists** | **$97,150** | **Other Teaching Services** |
| **5** | **Preschool ETL** | **$72,479** | **Other Teaching Services** |
| **6** | **Preschool Clerical** | **$14,649** | **Administration** |

## Focus Area 2: Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum (E and F)

The District Review conducted in 2019 and published in 2020 included findings emphasizing the need for the district to complete the work of documenting its curriculum. That work has since been completed. Transfer goals, learning standards, learning goals, and tiered vocabulary for each course are now shared publicly on the district's website. Faculty have access to proprietary information including student assessments and evaluation rubrics. This work was accomplished by a team of teacher curriculum leaders under the direction of our Director of Curriculum and Assessment. Now the focus of the curriculum work will shift to systematically reviewing and updating our curriculum. As stated in the District Review Report, this will "...help to ensure that teachers and students have access to an updated, comprehensive, and clearly articulated curriculum that is aligned to the content and rigor of the appropriate Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and that prepares students for careers, college, and civic involvement." To support teachers' effective implementation of the district curriculum, the district has established an instructional coaching model that has been identified as a strength by the district review team.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Director of Curriculum and Assessment** | **$100,000** | **Instructional Leadership** |
| **2** | **Teacher Curriculum Leaders** | **$8,000** | **Instructional Leadership** |
| **3** | **Instructional/SEL Coaches** | **$179,382** | **Instructional Leadership** |

## Focus Area 3: Expanded access to career-technical education, including "After Dark" district-vocational partnerships and innovation pathways reflecting local labor market priorities (I)

Northampton has a DESE-designated IT Innovation Pathway.

The Innovation Pathways program at NHS engages students in grades 9-12 that have expressed an interest in Information Technology. Students follow a specified course sequence that involves a computer programing course, a school-based internship with Tech Management where they learn the fundamental skills of help desk and troubleshooting. They take two college courses in programming and then a choice between networking and web design. They also engage in industry training through Tech Foundry, where they earn microbadges as well as participate in their final internship experience.

Students have two additional internship experiences during their summer. These opportunities have invited the option for paid part time work at the conclusion of the internship. Overall, students get exposed to career experiences, IT, and higher education opportunities to strengthen their readiness for both continuing education and careers in the IT field.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **IT Pathways Coordinator** | **$40,000** | **Administration** |
| **2** | **IT Tuitions** | **$3,500** | **Other** |
| **3** | **IT Pathway Supplies** | **$6,948** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |

## Focus Area 4: Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English learners (D and/or E)

Three years ago, Northampton implemented a full-inclusion model in each of its elementary schools. To create more inclusive learning environments, an additional 5.5 special education teacher FTE's were added to the elementary schools. Additional adjustments were made in subsequent budgets. As a result, the ratio of students with disabilities to special education teachers in the elementary schools was reduced from 10.1:1 to 7.5:1. During implementation of this model the percent of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations on MCAS 2.0 has increased from 12.7% to 21.2% and from 8.1% to 16.9% in English Language Arts and Mathematics, respectively.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Inclusion Teachers** | **$1,765,242** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |

Focus Area 5: Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention (D and/or H)

Our workforce does not mirror our student population, a fact which we believe lowers the engagement and academic success of our students of color. Our ESPs form one of the relatively more diverse sectors of our workforce. We believe that one of the most expedient ways to increase the diversity of our teachers is to assist ESPs with the process of earning their teaching licenses. We have established an ESP to Teacher Career Ladder to support ESPs with Bachelor's Degrees to obtain licensure in Special Education.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
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| **1** | **Tuition** | **$16,168** | **Other** |
| **2** | **Professional Development** | **$6,000** | **Professional Development** |

## Focus Area 6: Dropout prevention and recovery programs (I)

Although our dropout rate for all students is only 1 percent, our desire is to reduce the rate to 0 percent. Our dropouts are nearly all female, high-needs students. Many of them require an adjusted school schedule to complete their graduation requirements. Our Twilight Academy seeks to meet their needs by offering flexible scheduling and course offerings so that students can finish high school**.**

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **1** | **Salaries** | **$15,000** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |
| **2** | **Materials** | **$2,160** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |

**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 Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Student Growth: Mathematics mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* High School Completion: Four-year cohort graduation rate
* Custom District Metric 1: Student performance on universal screening

**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.*

The Northampton Public Schools recognizes that family engagement is critical to ensuring successful outcomes for all students. Given our focus on student subgroups, it is particularly important that we find ways to effectively engage our families of students of color, students from low-income backgrounds and EL students. We recognize that existing family engagement opportunities at our schools may not be effective in reaching all families. Therefore, in addition to our existing family engagement activities, we have created the position of Family and Student Engagement Coordinator in the FY 21 School Budget. The FSEC will be responsible for supporting families, staff and the community in their efforts to assist students in achieving academic excellence. The FSEC case manager will focus on building the critical partnership between families and schools.

**Certifications**

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

* School Councils
* Special Education Parent Advisory Council

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

Date of Approval: 05/14/2020