Student Opportunity Act Plan

Norwood

# 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.*

* Students with disabilities

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

In reviewing our MCAS data and subgroup performance, the group that stands out and must be a focus of our plan is our students with disabilities. This group is in high proportion and underperforming at all levels and has representation in all subgroups. In Norwood, over 20 percent of our students are identified as students requiring special education services. This subgroup is higher than the statewide average, and our current service delivery models need to be updated through resources and training.

Our plan's overall focus is to increase our ability to meet student needs, provide an inclusive structure, and develop an effective inclusive model of instruction for all students. By having programs and services that work to keep students in more inclusive environments, closely working with their typical peers, we will reduce the gaps in performance we see on our aggravated data.

In conclusion, as special education students are also found in other subgroups, we are hopeful to address those performance issues in these subgroups in conjunction with our focus on the larger special education population in our district.

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

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## Focus Area 1: Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum (E and F)

Evidence-based program #1:

Implement research-based early literacy programs in early elementary grades at all of our elementary schools.

As a district, we see implementing high-quality early literacy programs, providing increased, improved literacy professional development, and procuring supplemental Tier 2 instructional materials as complementary yet comprehensive strategies for improving student outcomes, particularly in ELA. In Year 1 (SY21), NPS will continue implementing the core ELA programs of Fundations in pre-kindergarten through grade 2. Additionally, we will purchase the research-based, core ELA program Savvas MyView for grades K-5.

Our implementation of core literacy will be structured on the evidence-based model below. The research will also guide our implementation of an effective early literacy program, which will include:

* Adopting high-quality, evidence-based literacy curricular materials that are aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in grades K-5. (Savvas MyView)
* Continue implementing Fundations in PreK-2 as early literacy phonological curriculum. (Fundations materials)
* Implementing evidence-based interventions to address individual student needs by providing materials and professional development for teachers, reading specialists, and special educators to improve their knowledge of phonics and best practices for students who are not yet meeting grade-level expectations. (Fundations Tier 2 training and Wilson Training and materials)
* Providing initial and ongoing professional development and support to teachers and support staff through embedded **instructional coaches and external PD providers.** (MyView, Fundations, Wilson PD)
* Establishing an extensive progress monitoring and assessment system, ensuring student needs are being identified and addressed in real-time. (Renaissance Star360 and CBM)
* Hiring an early literacy-based speech and language pathologist to support students' individual needs and inclusion support for all preschool and pre-k students.
* Differentiating, scaffolding, and accommodating the core curriculum to ensure equitable access for all students through supplementary technology (Lexia, Learning A-Z).

## Focus Area 2: Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English learners (D and/or E)

Evidence-based program #2:

Implement a Research-Based Cooperative Teaching model for Special Education

Dr. Philip O. Coakley Middle School will use the SOA funds to expand and support the co-teaching model at the middle school level. Currently, CMS has created a co-teaching schedule that includes aligned classes and planning time for designated special educators and their general education co-teaching partners. Small groups of educators have already participated in training around co-teaching. The SOA Plan funds will allow the school to engage in comprehensive training during the 2020- 2021 school year, leading to full implementation of co-teaching in ELA and math courses at all grade levels. This will be done through a two-pronged plan:

Universal Tier: All teachers, regardless of content, will receive introductory instruction in co-teaching and the six basic models of co-teaching outlined by various sources (CAST, BEH, Dieker, et al.). This will allow special educators in all curriculum areas to have a more substantive role in every classroom, making our inclusion model stronger. It will inform the entire staff of what co-teaching involves and how to use some of the strategies in classrooms with a second adult, even if that adult is not a licensed special educator. This program will also tie into the development of a Universal Design for Learning plan that CMS and the Norwood Public Schools will design over the coming years.

Tier Two: ELA and math teachers will receive more in-depth instruction and appropriate resources to develop consistent and strong co-teaching models. We plan to have co-taught math and co-taught ELA class on each team, at each grade level. This will require the addition of a special educator (increased from .4 to 1.0) at the grade 8 level to make this scheduling possible. These teachers will be trained in cooperative pairs using resources from the Bureau of Education and Research (BER). CMS has reached out to contract for Professional Development and coaching sessions with Katy Weber. Ms. Weber is a specialist in co-teaching with BER.

## Focus Area 3: Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs (C and/or D)

Evidence-based program #3:

Implement a Mental Health Programing at Norwood High School

At Norwood High School, we are seeing an increase in students with social-emotional disabilities that require more intensive educational interventions, often out of the district, and an increase in instances of mental health hospitalizations. To address this need, we will be partnering with Effective School Solutions. This program has a ten-year proven track record of making positive differences in the lives of the school district's most vulnerable students, providing a clinical solution that will not only bring a more robust therapeutic component to our school but will also be providing targeted professional development to establish a trauma-informed perspective in our school to address effectively educating this changing demographic of students.

Two full-time clinicians, along with ongoing oversight from a Regional Clinical Director and a member of the Quality Management Team, will provide daily group therapy, weekly individual counseling, family therapy, dedicated study skills class, supervised lunch, monthly evening parent psycho-social support program, immediate level-of-care evaluations for suicidal/homicidal students, all furniture and equipment for implementation of programming. Additionally, the district will benefit from programmatic and clinical supervision and consultation, data collection, child study consultation, collaboration with teachers, weekly student review meetings, and on-going professional development led by ESS clinical staff. Monthly newsletters will be sent to parents and the entire Norwood Public Schools staff with research updates and practice tools for the classroom.

ESS brings to the district specialized protocols for students struggling with school avoidance and significant behavioral disorders, specifically, trauma, emotional regulation, impulse control, frustration management, and the development of appropriate communication skills. ESS will collaborate with the district to identify appropriate OOD students to return to the LRE for whom they can program for and support within Norwood High School.

## Focus Area 4: Another evidence-based program proposed by the district—Social services to support students' social-emotional and physical health (C)

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**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 Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Student Growth: Mathematics mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Custom District Metric 1: Renaissance Assessment
* Custom District Metric 2: CBM Assessment

**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.*

We will continue to engage parents of special education students through our Special Education Parents Advisory Council as well as district and school-based programming. Furthermore, the yearly review of student educational plans will also serve as an opportunity to engage parents in their students' progress.

**Certifications**

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

First, it is essential to note that the district's strategic plan includes developing and implementing inclusive practices that meet our diverse learning needs in the district. Over the past two years, our families have been engaged in discussions around improving our special education programming and approach. This culminated with a discussion with our district Special Education Parent Advisory Council meeting and discussion around this plan. Furthermore, multiple discussions were conducted last year in the budget process detailing the different aspects of this plan to address special education improvements at all levels. The SOA plan was also a focus of our presentation at Town Meeting this past June as a final review by the community.

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

Date of Approval: 05/13/2020