Student Opportunity Act Plan

Rockland

# 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.*

* First language not English students
* English learners and former English learners
* Students with disabilities
* Low income/economically disadvantaged students
* High Needs students (defined as any student who is economically disadvantaged, has a disability, or is an English learner/former English learner)

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

The Rockland Public Schools are committed to serving all students. According to our district Core Values, "We believe all students can learn, grow and succeed". Over the past 5 years, The percentage of EL students enrolled in the Rockland Public Schools has increased from 2.4% in 2015 to 6.2% in 2019. Currently, there are 184 active ELL students; 220 total ELL's if you count Former English Learners (FELS). With a significant number of EL students entering and performing at Level 1, based on the WIDA Screener and ACCESS results. This data indicates a high level of need and low level of proficiency. The percentage of High Needs students has increased from 37.9% in 2015 to 47.9% in 2020. According to district achievement data, our English Learners (EL), Economically Disadvantaged (ED), and Students with Disabilities (SWD) students are not demonstrating the same level of achievement as their peers, as measured by the MCAS exam. The Rockland Public Schools are committed to close achievement gaps for these identified subgroups.

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

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

The Rockland Public Schools has implemented strategies that focus on meeting the varied needs of our population of EL, ED, and SWD students. We will continue to deepen our work in improving equitable access to education for EL, ED, and SWD students in the following ways:

Barring unforeseen budget shortfalls due to the coronavirus, the Rockland Public Schools are planning to invest in additional EL staffing for the 2020-2021 school year. Currently, we have 5 EL teachers in the district - one for each of our 5 schools. Our plan for 2020-2021 is to add one, EL, paraprofessional to each of our 5 buildings. One of these 5 paras has already been hired and is currently working collaboratively with the EL teacher in the Memorial Park Elementary school where our EL population has grown especially fast. These additional positions will allow us to meet Massachusetts' guidelines for the amount of service-time students receive based on their English proficiency level. Additionally, we will be able to provide more consultation to general educators who work with English Learners so that our EL students can be better supported in general education classrooms.

Another way we will address gaps in achievement between EL students and their classmates is to implement a one-to-one Chromebook program district-wide beginning in 2020-2021. K-6 will be assigned a Chromebook that is kept in a cart at school and grades 7-12 will take their Chromebooks home with them each day. It is our belief that providing all students with technology will help to reduce our achievement gaps.

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

Updating curriculum and instruction within the district is ongoing. RPS subscribes to a workshop model for ELA, Math, and Science instruction. In order to support equitable access for all students, the Rockland Public Schools is prioritizing professional development that supports teachers' ability to work with EL students and students with disabilities (SWD). In addition, we will continue to procure supplemental supports in the areas of phonics and assessments such as Lexia Core5 that provides differentiated literacy instruction for students of all ability levels (Phonics units of study, Heinemann i.e.), Haggerty Phonemic awareness, and the I-Ready Assessment system to reach all early elementary students. All teachers, inclusive of general education, special education, and ELL teachers are accessing professional development in these areas and the plan is to continue through the next two years.

In the area of mathematics, a district-wide math committee was developed last year to review our curriculum and recommend updates where appropriate. After working for a year, the elementary schools will be adopting Bridges mathematics program in compliance with the new MA Math Framework and to align K-6 math standards.

## Focus Area 3: Another evidence-based program proposed by the district : Increased or improved professional development (E)

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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: 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)
* 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).

**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.*

In order to offer direct services to individual and small groups of students, the Rockland Public Schools have committed substantial resources to social-emotional wellness and to the delivery of these services. We have one adjustment counselor and one school psychologist in each of our 5 schools. In addition, we partner with the North River Collaborative for social work interns who work directly with struggling students, partner with teachers for whole group instruction and work with families to connect them to necessary services in the community.

**Certifications**

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

Prior to March 13th, the SOA plan was vetted by all building principals and the director of student services as well as members of the school committee. The plan prior to March 13 was to have the "plan" vetted by all site councils, but that was derailed by Covid-19 and has not taken place yet.

Candidly, this plan most likely does not represent what our "plan" will be in two months. Given the level of uncertainty with this years' budget process, the funding of this plan is potentially impossible.

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

Date of Approval: 06/07/2021