Student Opportunity Act Plan

Swampscott

# 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
* 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.*

As a small district, our ability to reliably disaggregate student performance by subgroup is somewhat limited by very small numbers of students in some subgroups.

Among students of color (who are not also members of our high needs subgroups), MCAS performance and graduation rates are at or near parity with the rates for white students.

Our high needs subgroup includes students with disabilities, English Learners, and students from economically disadvantaged families. For the past three years, the students in this subgroup have lagged substantially behind their non- subgroup-identified peers on both the math and English language arts MCAS exams at almost all grade spans (elementary, middle and high), with no clear trends of decline or improvement, except for closing gaps for English learners in grades 5-12 on the English language arts MCAS. The gaps are substantially higher at the middle and high school levels (~50%) than at the elementary level (~30%). With the switch to MCAS 2.0 in 2019, gaps increased substantially for all of our high needs subgroups at the high school level. This presents a new challenge in our effort to ensure high achievement and preparation for life for all our students.

At the middle/high school levels, where our gaps are the greatest for our high needs subgroup, the gaps are highest for students with disabilities, with an average gap of 60% between the proportion of students with disabilities who meet/exceed expectations on ELA and math MCAS as compared to students without disabilities. Our graduation rates for students with disabilities, however, remain very strong.

We will continue to monitor the performance of our student subgroups, the effectiveness of our efforts to improve their performance, and use lessons learned to continue to implement innovative and successful practices and programs to improve outcomes and close gaps.

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

We began with a discussion among district and school administration of the data on achievement gaps and the programs that were already planned/underway to address them. We then reached out to the school community and ask for their input on the strategies most important to pursue to chose achievement gaps. Two hundred seventy people responded to our survey, mostly family members. The community survey results confirmed the choices of our administrative team, but also suggested a third strategy of significant community interest which we added to our plan.

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

To continue our efforts to close achievement gaps and raise achievement for all students, the Swampscott Public Schools will continue its work to support educators to implement high-quality aligned curriculum (evidence-based practice #4). Our particular focus for the next three years will be on mathematics K-10 and will affect all five schools in the district. In FY21, all teachers will follow the math curriculum maps we are on target to finish developing by June 2020. Over the next three years, we will also expand a program we are piloting this year in selected K to 9 math classrooms to introduce a station-rotation instructional model with the support of newly hired math coaches. In FY21 all math teachers will participate in 10 hours of professional development on Universal Design for Learning. In addition, in FY22 or FY23, we anticipate purchasing a new K- 5 math program. These initiatives will address all three high needs subgroups through our focus on improving the quality of lessons, materials, and differentiation for all learners in an inclusive setting.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Math Coaches (2.5 FTE)** | **185000** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |
| **2** | **STEM Consulting Teacher (.5 FTE)** | **40000** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |
| **3** | **Math UDL PD** | **10000** | **Professional Development** |

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

The second strategy to help us close learning gaps focuses on co-teaching for students with disabilities and English Learners in grades 5 to 12. This effort will impact Swampscott Middle School and Swampscott High School. We have some co-teaching already happening throughout this grade span. To improve the impact of this model on student performance, we will review and revise our scheduling processes and staffing allocations to provide more consistent co-teaching for more students in ELA, math and science classrooms, and to reduce the segregation of students with disabilities in high school class sections. It has also been several years since any PD was provided to support co-teaching. We will offer PD for all co-teaching pairs in summer 2020, and follow that up with coaching support throughout the FY21 school year. We anticipate continuing PD to deepen co-teaching practices through embedded PD and major revisions to the middle school and high school schedules to facilitate co-teaching in FY22 and FY23.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Instructional Coach (.5 FTE)** | **40000** | **Other Teaching Services** |
| **2** | **Special Education Co- Teachers** | **420000** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |
| **3** | **Co-teaching PD** | **15000** | **Professional Development** |

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

Our third strategy will be to expand opportunities for career and technical education (CTE). This effort will impact students at Swampscott High School, especially students with disabilities who sometimes have difficulty gaining admission to the regional technical high schools, but have a strong interest in pursuing a technical education. We will pursue a partnership with a regional technical high school to allow our students to access career and technical education programs through DESE's "After Dark" program. Swampscott students will take their academic classes at SHS and their CTE programs at a regional technical school. In the event that we are unable to partner with an area technical school, we will develop our own Innovation Pathway to give our students access to vocational training while they complete their high school education. We will follow DESE's best-practice model in developing at least one partnership per year for the next three years with local employers to provide our students with 100+ hour internship opportunities.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
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| **1** | **Career Education Coordinator (.5 FTE)** | **35000** | **Other Teaching Services** |
| **2** | **Transportation for students** | **15000** | **Other** |

**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 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)
* Custom District Metric 1: Number of students participating in CDE

**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 FY20, we used part of our Title I funding to hire a Family Engagement Coordinator for the first time. With the assistance of this Coordinator, we have held more parent meetings and have begun to reach out individually to parents in multiple ways to engage a wider variety of parents in providing input into the selection and implementation of a host of district improvement efforts. These outreach efforts include new newsletters (available in multiple languages), regular meetings with our METCO families near their homes in Boston, and a series of morning coffee events we will be implementing in connection with our new summer camp for English learners in summer 2020. We have also almost completed a new Family Engagement Policy that we are developing with input from a variety of families. We hope our new school policy will increase the number and diversity of voices on our School Councils, PTOs, and special education advisory council, as well as better inform all parents regarding the ways to engage with their students' education and with district staff.

To assess the impact of our new efforts, we will track the membership of these various organizations, as well as attendance at new outreach events.

**Certifications**

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

To engage stakeholders in the development of this plan, we surveyed staff, families, and school committee members regarding their preferences among 8 possible research-based improvement strategies we could pursue. Based on their input, and the data analysis and expertise of the building/district leadership team, we presented a proposed plan during the March 11 School Committee meeting, which was held in Roxbury to facilitate the involvement of our Boston-based families. Public comment on the proposed plan was solicited at that meeting. We also held a SEPAC (Special Education Parents Advisory Council) meeting on March 12 to solicit input on the plan from the families of students with disabilities. The draft plan was also made available to all Swampscott Public Schools families and staff on our website. All were invited to respond to a brief survey to provide feedback on the draft plan. District administration took feedback into account and developed a revised plan that was presented to the School Committee for approval at their meeting on April 2, 2020.

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

Date of Approval: 04/02/2020