Student Opportunity Act Plan

Triton

# 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
* 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 District Strategy for Improvement clearly outlines our priority areas to ensure that we are facilitating success for ALL our students, both during their school years and after graduation. However, we recognize that not all student groups have experienced the same level of success to date. Based on a review of our district data, and as outlined in the District Strategy posted on our website at [www.tritonschools.org,](http://www.tritonschools.org/) we have identified that our Student With Disabilities in particular have not seen the same level of growth and success as their non-Special Education peers, both on State MCAS testing and in local measures. Also noted in the data at both the state and local level is the performance of students who are economically disadvantaged.

This data has prompted extensive work over the past year and a half that included feedback from students, parents, and staff about the overall effectiveness of our Special Education programming using an independent educational consultant. The result has prompted a larger discussion and continued work about the relationship between Regular and Special Education staff, and a focus on our transition to and from various grade levels and schools.

We are committing to intensive work to close achievement 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**

The research is extensive, comprehensive and compelling in regards to the added benefits of full day kindergarten. The National Association of School Psychologists notes higher long-term achievement, fewer grade retentions, higher reading scores in early grades and more reinforcement of positive social behavior among the benefits of full-day kindergarten programs. In most recent years, our data (offering full and half day) supports the same view. The Dibels (Literacy) data for recent years routinely shows that students in our half day sessions made less gains than those in full day. Depending on the year, that discrepancy can be as large as roughly 57% of students in half day sessions being at the end of year benchmark, as compared to anywhere from 80% to 94% across the full day sessions. This speaks to the same trend found and reported in all of the research over the past decade.

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

We have worked towards offering Universal Free Full Day Kindergarten (UFFDK) for many years. This offering has become the norm in most Commonwealth communities, but we have struggled to find the funding to make this a reality. For the FY21 Budget cycle, we have adopted a phased approach to bringing Full Day K to all students. The increase funding required for the district to implement UFFDK is roughly $225,000, which is the funding we collect through tuitions ($2,950), offset by the savings in midday bus runs. As a Hold Harmless district, we would see very little new Chapter 70 dollars ($30/pp), so covering this increase in a single year has proven to be cost prohibitive. Our plan is to phase the cost increases over the coming three (3) years, using new Chapter 70 dollars to fund the increase.

For Fiscal Year 2021, we will be funding $75,000 towards UFFDK, roughly 1/3 of the total cost of implementing the full program. With that increased funding, the tuition would drop to $2,000 for the 2020/2021 school year. Our intention would be to fund an additional $75,000 in FY22 and then a further $75,000 in

FY23. That would allow the tuition to be set at $1,000 for the 2021/2022 school year, and then be completely eliminated as of the 2022/2023 school year.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Full Day Kindergarten Salaries** | **75000** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |

**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 Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Custom District Metric 1: Dibels Early Literacy
* Custom District Metric 2: Phonemic Awareness Screener
* Custom District Metric 3: IEP Goal Progress

**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 Triton District conducts a thorough budgeting process from January through March of each year. Included in this process are direct presentations by principals and administrators that outline the needs for their schools and programs, and include the input of School Councils. As the budget process continues, public hearings are held for community input, and there are also 'Budget Drop In' sessions scheduled in each community. These drop-in sessions provide an informal, unstructured opportunity for parents to discuss needs and priorities in a non-threatening environment, outside of the formality of televised public meetings. We schedule two (2) sessions in each of our three (3) member towns in the public library, one being held in the late morning and the other in the evening. UFFDK has been a consistent priority in all our budget discussions, both formal and informal. In addition to the formal feedback gathered during the budget process, we have surveyed parents, students, and staff as noted above in our review of Special Education programming in the district to identify areas of need.

**Certifications**

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

The Triton Schools actively engages with our Families and Community through the use of forums such as the budget drop ins noted above, as well as routine informal opportunities for engagement through our PTA's, surveys, focus groups, and various committees and working groups from time to time. The priorities outlined in this plan align with the collective beliefs and priorities of the issues raised during the current and prior years.

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

Date of Approval: 03/11/2020