Student Opportunity Act Plan

Westborough

# 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
* Students wit**h** disabilities

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

In preparation for creating the Westborough Public Schools Long Range Strategic Plan, we analyzed our MCAS scores, grades and course taking patterns of our students and identified special education students and ELL students as two subgroups that we wanted to provide focused support to during the SY 2021-2023 school year. We found persistent disparities in performance among these student subgroups. The goal for these groups is stated in our plan in the following way: "Develop instructional approaches that meet the diverse needs of all learners and assure access to a full range of district opportunities in an inclusive environment and a least restrictive setting for all students in WPS." Our rationale for this goal is the following: "Researchers have established that the academic development of students is maximized when instruction takes place in the general classroom environment."

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

To obtain this goal we are going to be expanding our use of 2 of the 17 evidence-based programs recommended by DESE:

* we will expand co-teaching practices throughout the district and (2) we will expand and enhance our research-based early literacy programs in the elementary grades.

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

Our two subgroups - ELL and SPED students - will each benefit from being taught in an inclusive environment rather than being pulled out and taught in a decontextualized setting. We will allocate funds to this district-wide initiative. Specifically, we will allocate funds to professional development training that we will require of our ELL, SPED and Gen Ed teachers. In addition, we will allocate funds to pay co-teaching consultants to come into our co-teaching classrooms and observe and critique our co-teaching teams.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Inclusion PD** | **20000** | **Professional Development** |
| **2** | **Inclusions Teachers (2)** | **$150,00** | **Classroom & Specialist Teachers** |

Focus Area 2: Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades (E, F, and G)

This is a grade K-2 initiative that will take place in our three early elementary schools. Westborough uses a guided reading approach to literacy instruction in these grades, however, we recently determined that ELL and SPED students in particular could use more systematic work in the area of phonics and phonemic awareness. We will therefore spend out funds on adopting a phonemic awareness and phonic program and we will use our funds to provide our teachers with professional development.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Literacy Instruction PD** | **20,000** | **Professional Development** |
| **2** | **Phonics Curriculum** | **35,000** | **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 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: Course taking patterns in high school
* Custom District Metric 2: DIBELS early literacy scores

**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 district already uses multiple means to reach out to special needs families. This includes routine contact with our SPED families through our SPED Parent Advisory Council (SPAC). We also hold evening forums on topics that interest special education and other families. For example, this year, we held two evening events focused on dyslexia. Next year and into the future, we plan to continue utilizing the SPAC, hold forums, and send out surveys in order to engage with families about their students' needs.

The district already has multiple means to reach out to special needs families in order to meaningfully engage with our ELL families. One way we will continue to engage with them is through our Multilingual Parent Group. This group meets several times a year. Another way we will continue to engage with them is through the free English classes we offer to parents. We run our classes throughout the year. Finally, to the extent possible given the COVID crisis, we will continue to send teachers out to the Westborough apartment buildings' common rooms to hold evening storytelling hours for the families and their children.

**Certifications**

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

In creating our strategic plan, we solicited input from all of our parent groups and from surveys sent out to all of our families. The parent groups include the school councils, the Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and the Multilingual Parent Group. In addition, we gathered input from our staff and the local teachers’ association. The leadership team reviewed the data and established priority areas for improvement and action steps to take. These findings were discussed and reviewed by the school committee.

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

Date of Approval: 06/10/2020