

# District Review Report

Boston Public Schools

Follow-Up District Review  
Conducted March 28 – April 1, 2022

Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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This document was prepared by the  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Jeffrey C. Riley  
Commissioner  
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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906  
Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370  
[www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)



# Introduction and Executive Summary

## Background: 2020 District Review Report and Memorandum of Understanding

In fall 2019, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) conducted a District Review of the Boston Public Schools (BPS), the first such review of the Boston school system since DESE's Office of School and District Accountability was established in 2008. At the time of the BPS review, Dr. Brenda Cassellius, who began her appointment as superintendent in July 2019, was leading a public stakeholder engagement process for the district's new five-year strategic plan.

The District Review Report was released in March 2020 and highlighted serious challenges and deficiencies across a broad range of district functions. The report emphasized that BPS was not providing adequate services for students with disabilities and English learners in accordance with applicable laws; cited poorly-run operational functions, such as transportation and facilities management, that were interfering with student learning; noted a lack of quality curricula and effective instructional practices, especially at the high school level; and highlighted entrenched district systems, such as the student assignment process, that contributed to a pattern of inequitable access to quality education across BPS. Underpinning all of this was the lack of a stable, supportive, and trusting dynamic between schools and district staff, due in part to frequent turnover of superintendents and central office staff.

In his letter accompanying the 2020 District Review Report, Commissioner Riley noted that receivership or an empowerment zone model could be appropriate interventions for BPS given the magnitude of these challenges, but he instead chose to offer a new path forward for BPS. Through a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) between DESE and BPS, the district agreed to improve its performance in key areas, and DESE agreed to provide complementary supports and resources to assist BPS.

Both parties signed the MOU on March 10, 2020, and they specified goals and targets in each MOU priority area in May 2021. Since then, BPS and DESE have met regularly to discuss the district's progress on its key areas and other improvement plans.

Earlier this year, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) asked for an update on BPS's progress on the MOU. This coincided with Dr. Cassellius' announcement of her resignation, effective at the end of this school year. To provide a timely and accurate update to BESE about the status of BPS – as well as provide additional guidance to the district – Commissioner Riley requested that DESE staff and contractors conduct a Follow-Up District Review in spring 2022.

## Challenges with Accurate Data Collection

Throughout the term of the MOU and in completing this District Follow-Up Review, DESE staff struggled to gain an accurate picture of the status of many BPS initiatives due to a pattern of inaccurate or misleading data reporting by the district:

- Transportation on-time arrival data provided by BPS to DESE as part of the district's MOU progress reporting were inaccurate due to the existence of uncovered routes. The district did not count buses that simply never showed up as "late," thereby inflating the count of buses that arrived on time. After DESE brought this issue to the attention of the city, BPS took months to correct it. BPS provided a corrected transportation data report only after DESE initiated the Follow-Up District Review.
- The list of 29 schools with completed bathroom facilities renovations provided by BPS as part of the Follow-Up Review included at least two schools with unrenovated bathrooms. DESE staff knew of these unrenovated bathrooms because of recent site visits at the schools and reached out to BPS to confirm the accuracy of the list. BPS staff responded that the list was fully accurate, even though it was not.
- Student enrollment and withdrawal data reported by BPS to DESE and displayed publicly in the form of graduation and dropout rates on the DESE website are likely inaccurate due to lack of appropriate internal controls at the school and central office levels. Indeed, previous federal audits noted a "significant deficiency" in the way BPS was reporting withdrawal data, with subsequent audits indicating that these reporting issues persist.

In addition, in advance of the on-site portion of the Follow-Up Review, BPS may have coordinated a response with their staff participating in interviews with DESE. This may have impeded the review team from forming a complete picture of BPS's strengths and challenges.

## Some Areas of Strength, but Strong Leadership and Execution Necessary to Ensure Impact

Since 2020, BPS has made progress in some areas identified in the MOU as well as in other areas cited in the 2020 District Review Report. The strategic plan developed by Dr. Cassellius and her team has begun to guide the district's work and has provided a common framework for these improvements.

The review team noted several new and important "Strengths Findings" in the Curriculum and Instruction standard, including the district's progress in adopting high-quality instructional materials, BPS's district-wide instructional focus on early literacy, and the approval of a new policy to align district-wide graduation requirements to MassCore for the graduating class of 2026.

Strong teacher diversification pipeline programs, initial improvements to English learner services, enhanced professional development offerings, and more consistent use of growth assessments across the district were also identified as strengths.

Finally, there is some evidence that the district is beginning to use its considerable one-time funding to directly support student needs, such as funding the district's Quality Guarantee, which has provided enhanced staffing to underperforming schools. The district is also beginning to make some headway in much-needed facilities repairs, renovations, and upgrades.

The superintendent effectively led these initiatives, despite challenges in managing a central office with entrenched dysfunction. They represent real progress over a short period of time and in some cases may lay the groundwork for transformative change within BPS. However, ongoing work in these areas is in early stages of implementation and remains highly vulnerable to disruption.

Concerns about whether the district can maintain momentum in these areas and follow through with quality execution are especially important for BPS, given the district's continued leadership instability. Furthermore, as illustrated throughout this review, the district lacks robust progress monitoring systems for implementing strategic plan initiatives, or ways to measure the impact of these initiatives on students. This represents the continuation of a trend highlighted in the 2020 District Review Report, which noted that BPS does not lack for plans, but that strong execution of these plans is a rarity for the district.

## Lack of Improvement in Areas Affecting the District's Most Vulnerable Students

Areas that were highlighted in the 2020 report and in the BPS-DESE MOU as urgent priorities that disproportionately affect the district's most vulnerable students continue to suffer from a lack of focused attention by the district. BPS has shown little to no progress in addressing the needs of its students with disabilities, English learners, and students at the district's lowest-performing schools, resulting in continued poor outcomes for tens of thousands of students. Persistent challenges in these areas have been exacerbated by significant leadership turnover in the district's special education and English learner departments.

BPS has shown a lack of urgency in improving special education services, despite significant deficiencies noted in the 2020 District Review Report and BPS's commitment to make special education a priority in the MOU. Fully 20% of district students are receiving special education services, yet these services remain in disarray, and the district lacks well-understood special education policies and procedures as well as appropriate plans for educating students in the least restrictive environment. The disproportionate placement of black and brown students in substantially separate settings is of particular concern. As just one example of the district's inadequate focus in this area, over the past two years, the topic of special education appeared on the BPS School Committee agenda just once. Frustration on the part of families, advocates, and community members has reached a breaking point.

While BPS has laid some groundwork for improvements, instructional quality for English learners is inadequate, and the district remains a party to an agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice that addresses areas of noncompliance. Hundreds of English learners are still not receiving their required EL instruction, and appropriate strategies and systems to improve and monitor quality of instruction are not in place.

While numerous instructional initiatives are underway, the lack of coherent improvement systems and capacity to provide targeted support to the district's 31 lowest-performing schools is highly concerning. The MOU identified the need for focused support for these schools as a BPS priority. Over 14,000 students continue to be served in these schools, which are among the lowest performing 10% of schools in the state.

## Failure to Meet Acceptable Minimum Standards for Essential District Functions

In several operational areas, BPS is not currently meeting an acceptable minimum standard for basic district functioning. Failures in basic operations and safety protocols have increased in the past two years at BPS.

This Follow-Up District Review identifies four major operational functions – transportation, facilities, safety protocols, and data reporting – as areas of challenge for the district.

Of significant concern is that transportation issues, an area highlighted in the 2020 District Review Report and a BPS priority area identified in the MOU, have worsened. In addition to continued low on-time arrivals throughout much of the year, uncovered routes are significantly disrupting learning for thousands of students each month, with a disproportionate impact on students with disabilities. For example, in January 2022 alone, there were 1,148 uncovered morning routes impacting approximately 16,000 student rides.

Significant variation in the quality of the district's facilities remains a key issue, and yet the district still lacks a comprehensive facilities masterplan to guide decisions about new school buildings, renovations, repairs, and closures.

Finally, the district does not have an effective and consistent process for tracking and responding to parental complaints regarding student bullying and other safety concerns. Additionally, a review of the impact of the reduction of school police should be conducted.

## Systemic Barriers to District Improvement and Equitable Access to Quality Education

BPS has not made progress in tackling systemic barriers to district improvement such as overhauling the school assignment system, which concentrates high levels of student need in a fraction of the district's

schools, or securing significant changes to the transportation contract, which is a major barrier to dependable transportation services for all students.

The district has also experienced steady and significant enrollment declines, yet BPS lacks operational plans that appropriately address excess capacity in the system, resulting in a failure to maximize the impact of district's considerable financial resources.

Without addressing these deeper systemic challenges, school and district improvement efforts will continue to flounder.

## Persistent Challenges with Leadership Continuity

The district remains without stable leadership or strong institutional knowledge to tackle the critical and persistent challenges facing BPS.

Mayor Wu was elected in fall of 2021 and Superintendent Cassellius will depart at the end of the school year. The new superintendent will be district's fifth leader since 2013. The Boston School Committee is currently on a tight timeline to find a new superintendent to begin in the fall, when typically such search processes take a year or more. The availability of quality candidates this late in the year is of significant concern.

The new superintendent will also face governance uncertainty, with active debates over whether the school committee should remain appointed by the mayor, elected, or a hybrid of the two. This follows a tumultuous period with numerous school committee resignations and significant turnover of the committee overall.

## Conclusion

Over the past several years, under Dr. Cassellius' leadership, BPS has successfully launched several new district-wide initiatives and has further advanced others. However, the district has failed to effectively serve its most vulnerable students, carry out basic operational functions, and address systemic barriers to providing an equitable, quality education.

As noted in the 2020 District Review Report, the BPS-DESE MOU, and now in this District Review Follow-Up Report, the problems facing BPS are abundantly clear. This moment requires bold, student-centered decision-making and strong execution to ensure the district delivers the quality education its students deserve. BPS needs immediate improvement.

# Organization of this Report

## Identification of Topics

The BPS Follow-Up District Review Report is organized according to DESE's six district review standards:

- Leadership and Governance
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Student Supports
- Human Resources and Professional Development
- Assessment
- Financial and Asset Management

The review team did not seek to provide an exhaustive update on each area of the 2020 report. Instead, the goal of this report is to highlight salient topics related to BPS's progress and performance within each standard, while still providing a comprehensive review across the six standards.

Topics covered in the Follow-Up District Review Report were selected for each standard based on:

- Findings from the 2020 District Review Report
- Progress made on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BPS and DESE
- Identification of critical, new issues facing the district since 2020

## Identification of Findings

Within this report, the review team noted two types of findings.

Strength findings: The review team noted a "Strength finding" in areas where the district has maintained strong practices or has established significant new policies or programs since 2020. New policies and programs noted as a "Strength" must have implementation initiatives actively underway and must be demonstrating a positive impact at the school and/or student level that could be a model for other districts.

Challenges and Areas for Growth findings: The review team noted a "Challenges and Areas for Growth finding" where the district is experiencing persistent challenges that necessitate focused improvement.



# Boston Public Schools Overview

## Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, comprehensive district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. Reviews carefully consider the effectiveness of systemwide functions, with reference to the six district standards used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE): Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, Human Resources and Professional Development, Student Support, and Financial and Asset Management. Reviews identify systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. In addition to providing information to each district reviewed, DESE uses review reports to identify resources and/or technical assistance to provide to the district.

## Methodology

Reviews collect evidence for each of the six district standards above. For this review, DESE retained American Institutes for Research (AIR) to coordinate a professional team of classroom observers and use an observation tool to collect data about the quality and nature of instruction in a large sample of schools and classrooms. DESE also convened a district review team consisting of 28 DESE staff with expertise in each of the district standards. The review team reviewed documentation, data, and reports for five days before conducting a three-day site visit. The team conducted interviews and focus group sessions with stakeholders including school committee members, teachers' association representatives, administrators, teachers, students, and students' families. After the site visit, the team met and worked together over a period of three weeks to develop findings and recommendations and draft a report. DESE then edited and fact-checked the draft report and sent it to the district for factual review before publishing it on the DESE website.

This report is reflective of information gathered through the end of the site visit and classroom observation period on April 1, 2022. The report is as of that point in time and events or initiatives that have occurred since then are not included in the findings of the report.

## Site Visit

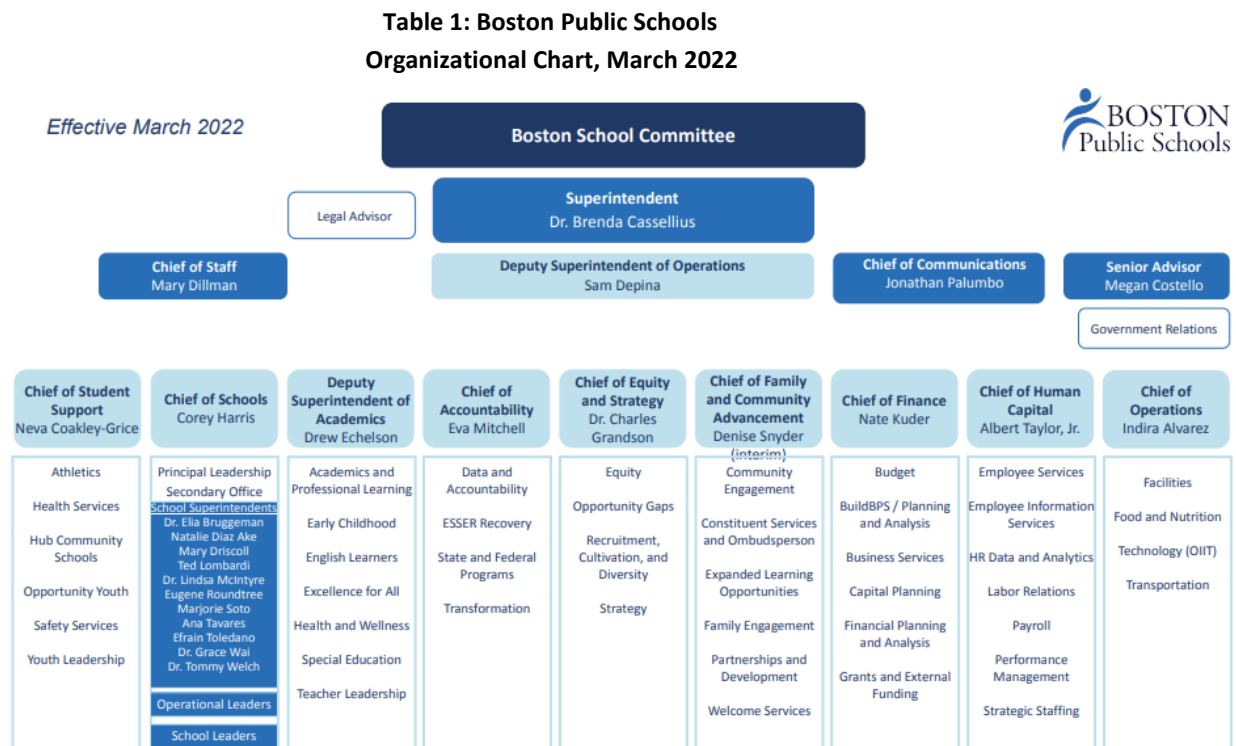
The site visit to the Boston Public Schools was conducted from March 28 to March 30, 2022. The site visit included 97 interviews with approximately 100 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, teachers' association representatives, and city officials (Appendix C lists interview and focus group participants). The review team also conducted 25 focus groups with students, parents/guardians, advocacy organizations, and staff, including principals, teachers, special education coordinators, and language acquisition team facilitators.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, attendance, MCAS assessments, and expenditures. A team of professional classroom observers conducted observations of instruction in 477 classrooms in a sample of 42 schools. This team collected data using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), a research-based observation method that measures interactions between students and teachers that are associated with improved outcomes. Appendix D contains a summary of the team’s findings, *Boston Public Schools Classroom Visits: Summary of Findings, Districtwide Instructional Observation Report, March 2022*.

## District Profile

Boston has a mayor and a city council, and the mayor appoints all the members of the school committee. The 7 members of the school committee and the 1 student representative meet 26 times per year.

The district superintendent has been in the position since July 1, 2019. Her leadership team, as of March 2022, was organized as follows:



In the 2021-2022 school year, the district has 123.8 (FTE) principals leading 113 schools and there are 4,256.0 (FTE) teachers in the district.

In the 2021-2022 school year, 46,169 students are enrolled in the district’s schools:

**Table 2: Boston Public Schools: Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment\*, 2021-2022**

School	Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Lee Academy	ES	PK - 03	175
Baldwin Early Learning Pilot Academy	EES	PK - 01	141
Lyon K-8 School	ESMS	K - 08	133
West Zone Early Learning Center	EES	PK - 01	88
Ellison-Parks Early Education School	ES	PK - 03	175
East Boston Early Education Center	EES	PK - 01	188
Haynes Early Education Center	EES	PK - 01	178
Boston Teachers Union K-8 Pilot	ESMS	PK - 08	290
Jackson-Mann K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	352
Shaw Elementary School	ES	PK - 03	154
Higginson Inclusion K0-2 School	EES	PK - 02	119
Mattahunt Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	450
Curley K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	900
Beethoven Elementary School	EES	PK - 02	255
Carter School	MSHS/K-12	08 - 12	24
Sumner Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	470
Taylor Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	298
Guild Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	242
Alighieri Dante Montessori School	ES	PK - 06	104
Ellis Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	333
Dearborn 6-12 STEM Academy	MSHS/K-12	06 - 12	578
Haley Pilot School	ESMS	PK - 08	359
McKay K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	687
Everett Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	270
Eliot K-8 Innovation School	ESMS	PK - 08	796
Mendell Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	261
Roosevelt K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	406
Conley Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	176
Grew Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	203
Holmes Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	254
O'Donnell Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	261
Condon K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	666
Hennigan K-8 School	ESMS	K - 08	504
Chittick Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	224
Otis Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	404
Kennedy John F Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	334
UP Academy Holland**	ES	PK - 05	663
Philbrick Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	99
Winthrop Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	212
Tynan Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	214
Hurley K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	351
Lee K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	547
Manning Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	160
Kilmer K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	404
Harvard-Kent Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	347
Bradley Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	291

**Table 2 Continued: Boston Public Schools: Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment\*, 2021-2022**

School	Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Mather Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	493
Tobin K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	401
Perkins Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	173
Mozart Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	158
Murphy K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	857
Hale Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	172
Perry K-8 School	ES	PK - 06	187
Orchard Gardens K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	733
Ohrenberger School	ESMS	03 - 08	485
Lyndon K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	648
Kennedy Patrick J Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	261
Henderson K-12 Inclusion School Lower	EES	PK - 01	202
Dever Elementary School**	ES	PK - 06	372
Bates Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	216
Quincy Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	711
Clap Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	120
Adams Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	245
Mason Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	193
Greenwood Sarah K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	363
Gardner Pilot Academy	ESMS	PK - 08	377
Kenny Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	337
Warren-Prescott K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	520
Channing Elementary School	ES	PK - 06	201
McKinley Schools	MSHS/K-12	02 - 12	219
Russell Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	366
Trotter K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	358
Winship Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	265
Edison K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	486
King K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	551
Higginson-Lewis K-8 School	ESMS	03 - 08	188
Mildred Avenue K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	624
Young Achievers K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	555
Mission Hill K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	223
Frederick Pilot Middle School	MS	06 - 08	340
Blackstone Elementary School	ES	PK - 05	455
Henderson K-12 Inclusion School Upper	MSHS/K-12	02 - 12	718
Irving Middle School	MS	06 - 08	133
Timilty Middle School	MS	06 - 08	205
Brighton High School	HS	09 - 12	360
Boston International High School & Newcomers Academy	HS	09 - 12	421
Charlestown High School	MSHS/K-12	07 - 12	821
Community Academy	HS	09 - 12	34
Excel High School	HS	09 - 12	439
Burke High School	HS	09 - 12	330
East Boston High School	MSHS/K-12	07 - 12	1,111
English High School	HS	09 - 12	525

**Table 2 Continued: Boston Public Schools: Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment\*, 2021-2022**

School	Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Madison Park Technical Vocational High School	HS	09 - 12	1,160
Fenway High School	HS	09 - 12	384
Another Course To College	HS	09 - 12	231
New Mission High School	MSHS/K-12	07 - 12	543
Greater Egleston High School	HS	09 - 12	83
Boston Latin Academy	MSHS/K-12	07 - 12	1,685
Boston Arts Academy	HS	09 - 12	490
Boston Adult Tech Academy	HS	11 - 12	120
Margarita Muniz Academy	HS	09 - 12	323
Boston Community Leadership Academy	MSHS/K-12	07 - 12	663
Boston Latin School	MSHS/K-12	07 - 12	2,416
Quincy Upper School	MSHS/K-12	06 - 12	553
O'Bryant School of Math & Science	MSHS/K-12	07 - 12	1,548
Community Academy of Science and Health	HS	09 - 12	331
Lyon High School	HS	09 - 12	129
Mario Umana Academy	ESMS	PK - 08	653
TechBoston Academy	MSHS/K-12	06 - 12	888
Snowden International High School	HS	09 - 12	485
Hernandez K-8 School	ESMS	PK - 08	424
Horace Mann School for the Deaf Hard of Hearing	MSHS/K-12	PK - 12	70
Boston Collaborative High School	HS	09 - 12	98
<b>Total</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>PK - 12</b>	<b>46,169</b>

\*As of October 1, 2021

\*\*School in state receivership

Between the 2019-2020 and 2021-2022 school years, overall student enrollment decreased from 50,480 to 46,169, or 8.5 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, low income students, and English learners (ELs) and former ELs) as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

The total in-district per-pupil expenditure in the 2020-2021 school year was \$28,564. Actual net school spending has been well above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table 28 in Appendix B.

## Impact of COVID-19

Beginning in March 2020, BPS, like other Massachusetts school districts, was forced to devote significant attention and resources to managing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its students, families, and staff. COVID-19 necessitated that district and school-level staff absorb a significant volume of additional work to establish and implement COVID-19 initiatives, monitor cases, make continuous adjustments based on data.

With the shift to remote learning, the district established new supports and services, including distributing Chromebooks to all students and educators, providing hot spots, and facilitating meal services. As the district prepared to return to in-person learning during the 2020-2021 school year, BPS adopted COVID-19 protocols for in-person learning and used new infusions of state and federal funding to upgrade air quality in school facilities, provided masks and other PPE, and leveraged the state's COVID testing program to provide symptomatic and diagnostic testing in schools.

# Summary of Findings: Strengths and Challenges and Areas for Growth

## Strength Findings

### **Leadership and Governance**

1. The District Strategic Plan is beginning to guide the work of the district. Multiple initiatives are underway including the advancement of instructional priorities, development and use of the district's Racial Equity Planning Tool, and enhanced accessibility for families and community members. School committee and city leaders have created supporting documents and made commitments aligned to the strategic plan.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

2. The district has made significant investments in initiatives intended to strengthen core instruction – an instructional focus area of equitable literacy and high-quality curriculum adoption – and this work is showing some evidence of impact at the school level, particularly in grades K-8. These items were cited as recommendations for BPS in the 2020 District Review Report.

3. The district has adopted MassCore, the state's recommended program of study intended to align high school coursework with college and workforce expectations, beginning with incoming ninth graders in fall 2022. Adopting MassCore was identified in the BPS-DESE MOU as a priority for BPS. In addition, the district has advanced other initiatives intended to promote equitable access to coursework across the district.

### **Student Support**

4. The Office of English Learners has laid the groundwork for enhanced English learner supports and outcomes through effective stakeholder engagement, enhanced school-level communication, and investments in professional development, personnel, and infrastructure.

### **Human Resources and Professional Development**

5. BPS has continued to develop and implement strong pipeline, recruitment, and retention programs to increase the diversity of the educator and school leader workforce and has set expectations for hiring goals in this area across the district. This was identified as a priority initiative in the BPS-DESE MOU.

6. The district has created a robust menu of professional development offerings and has coordinated the development of specific PD content aligned to the district's Equitable Literacy focus.

## **Assessment**

7. The Office of Data and Accountability provides valued supports to central office staff and school-based educators, including developing and promoting the use of a balanced assessment system and providing robust data inquiry coaching. Consistent district-wide use of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) growth assessment is a notable improvement from the 2020 District Review Report.

## **Financial and Asset Management**

8. The district has significant funding available and is leveraging city capital funds, grants, and other one-time funds to support targeted school and student needs. Since 2020, BPS has executed several urgent facility priorities, including bathroom facility renovations (which were identified as a priority in the MOU). The "Quality Guarantee" framework and investments from the City of Boston are supporting initiatives including equitable school-level staffing, and the district has developed a strong initial process for engaging stakeholders and allocating federal relief (ESSER) funds.

## **Challenges and Areas for Growth**

### **Leadership and Governance**

1. District leaders have not prioritized two BPS functions in crisis. Special education and transportation were identified as critical BPS priorities in the BPS-DESE MOU, yet these functions have stagnated and, in some cases, further deteriorated since 2020. The deficiencies in these areas disproportionately affect many of BPS's most vulnerable students and the district lacks the requisite staff capacity for improvements.

2. The district continues to lack the central office capacity and systems necessary to drive improvement in the 31 lowest performing BPS schools, despite this being a BPS priority identified in the MOU. While these schools have received additional staff and were prioritized for district-wide instructional initiatives, they still lack high-quality targeted improvement plans, sufficient central office support, and accountability for results.

3. Leadership instability at the school committee, superintendent, and department level is endemic at BPS and continues to impede district improvement efforts and hamper support for school-level leaders and staff. Rapid leadership turnover in departments serving English learners and students with disabilities, as well as operational departments, is especially concerning.

4. The district has not yet implemented a robust, district-wide system for tracking implementation progress or measuring outcomes across the six commitments and 40+ priorities outlined in the district's strategic plan. Some initiatives in the strategic plan are off-track or not yet fully launched and lack project plans and clear timelines for when progress can be expected.



## **Curriculum and Instruction**

5. Despite initial progress in establishing an instructional focus for the district, there is variation in school-level implementation of its instructional priorities and the district has not yet fully established systems to monitor quality implementation.

6. Despite progress made in planning for the rollout of a district-wide instructional focus, the instructional quality and equitable access to advanced coursework at the high school level remains a challenge. Expectations for instruction, including use of high-quality curricular materials and alignment with the district's instructional focus, are insufficiently defined for the district's high schools. While MassCore adoption will support improved student outcomes over time, access to consistent graduation standards and advanced coursework remains highly inequitable across student groups.

7. The quality of organizational and instructional practices observed in observed classrooms were primarily rated in the middle range, indicating that classroom practices associated with improved outcomes were evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. In general, classroom organizational practices and student engagement practices received higher ratings than those practices related to instructional support.

## **Student Support**

8. The district has demonstrated a lack of urgency in improving special education services, failing to make discernable progress in this area despite repeated DESE findings and a commitment by BPS in the MOU to address special education. The district's special education services remain in systemic disarray, lack consistent policies and procedures, and do not consistently provide appropriate learning opportunities in the least restrictive environment for all students with disabilities.

9. The district is not ensuring that all English learners receive appropriate ESL instruction. The district lacks a comprehensive ESL curriculum and clear instructional expectations, and systems are not yet in place to effectively support and comprehensively monitor the quality of EL instruction at the school level.

10. The district's school choice and assignment system does not provide equal access to high-quality schools for all students. Although the district has made changes to the exam school admissions policy, the impact of these changes remains unclear. Moreover, these changes did not address longstanding structural challenges with the open enrollment schools in BPS.

11. The district's system for managing, responding to, and resolving complaints is not responsive to parent and guardian concerns; does not support the physical, social, and emotional well-being of all students; and does not ensure a safe environment for all students.

## **Human Resources and Professional Development**

12. While the district has taken steps to increase the consistency of the educator evaluation process, the district's use of the evaluation system does not accomplish the essential goals of providing high-quality feedback to educators and identifying ineffective teachers. The BPS educator evaluation system is also not fully aligned to state regulatory requirements.

13. Despite the development of quality professional learning offerings, equitable educator access to professional development is a challenge. The district lacks mechanisms to ensure that all educators receive high-quality professional development and can take advantage of the district's enhanced PD offerings.

## **Assessment**

14. The district lacks the necessary systems and internal controls at the central office and school levels to ensure accurate data reporting on key indicators. DESE's reported graduation and dropout rates for the district are likely inaccurate due to a failure by BPS to ensure that schools possess appropriate documentation to withdraw an enrolled student.

## **Financial and Asset Management**

15. Transportation services, driven by substantial challenges with the district's transportation contract, are significantly and inequitably affecting student learning. On-time bus arrival rates remain unacceptably low and uncovered routes can affect thousands of students each month. Many students whose morning bus routes are uncovered simply do not attend school that day, and students with disabilities are disproportionately affected.

16. Despite some progress in identifying and addressing facilities in need of renovation and repair, the district lacks a comprehensive long-term master facilities plan and a coherent preventive/deferred maintenance plan. The district does not currently implement a transparent, inclusive, and data-informed decision-making process around facilities improvements, and lacks operational plans that appropriately address excess building capacity in the system due to persistently declining student enrollment.

# Leadership and Governance

## Contextual Background

### **Strategic Plan**

Following the release of and informed by the 2020 [District Review Report](#), Boston Public Schools (BPS) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in March 2020. The MOU prioritizes initiatives with assurances of identifying corresponding measures to promote positive student outcomes. By April of 2020, BPS had developed and presented a [new five-year strategic plan](#).

### **Low-Performing Schools**

As described in the 2020 District Review Report, the district has a large number of Transformation Schools (i.e., among the lowest performing 10 percent of schools in the state, as identified by DESE's district and school accountability system), and many of these schools are identified by DESE as low performing year after year. In 2020, the MOU between the Boston Public Schools and DESE identified 33 Transformation Schools for which the district would make specific improvements and meet performance measures of success (see Appendix A of the MOU). Since 2020, two of the Transformation Schools are no longer in operation: Clarence R. Edwards Middle closed at the end of the 2020-2021 school year and John W. McCormack merged with Boston Community Leadership Academy to form a new Grade 7-12 school.

Consistent with state and federal accountability requirements for 2021, all schools in BPS have maintained their accountability status since 2019. In the 2021-2022 school year, approximately 30 percent of BPS students (14,074 students) attend a school that is among the lowest performing 10 percent of schools in the state. Based on 2019 accountability data (most recent available due to the pandemic) about 27 percent of BPS schools have been identified by DESE as schools whose performance is among the lowest performing 10 percent of schools in the state.

### **School Autonomy**

In a letter to Superintendent Cassellius accompanying the 2020 Boston Public Schools District Review, Commissioner Riley explained that the district's school autonomy model was one of his primary concerns stemming from the review, noting that the model "has not been effectively monitored to ensure that only those schools with strong or improved performance receive these flexibilities." To address this issue, BPS and DESE agreed to develop an earned autonomy model (now referred to as performance management framework) as a long-term initiative with primary responsibility to complete assigned to DESE. DESE has undertaken this work with the district by assigning key staff members from both organizations to engage in this process.

Most recently, DESE has contracted with the Center for Assessment as an experienced partner to support this initiative. While this larger initiative is underway, the district has taken steps to create common expectations aligned to its five-year strategic plan, such as establishing [MassCore](#) as a common expectation for all high schools, and the adoption of Equitable Literacy as the districtwide instructional focus for a three-year period. This review confirmed that the effort underway to establish a performance management framework remains vitally important to set clear and consistent expectations across the district.

## Strength Findings

- 1. The District Strategic Plan is beginning to guide the work of the district. Multiple initiatives are underway including the advancement of instructional priorities, development and use of the district's Racial Equity Planning Tool, and enhanced accessibility for families and community members. School committee and city leaders have created supporting documents and made commitments aligned to the strategic plan.**
  - A. The district engaged effectively with stakeholders in the development of the District Strategic Plan and reinforcing commitments have been made by the school committee and city leaders.
    1. Informed by the District Review Report (conducted in 2019 and published in 2020), the superintendent and her team developed the new strategic plan through a comprehensive and inclusive process that included extensive stakeholder input and personal visits to 125 district schools.
    2. The school committee has established shared accountability by outlining its own [Goals and Values](#) which are aligned to the commitments contained in the district's strategic plan.
    3. Support for the strategic plan extends to the City of Boston, with the Quality Guarantee framework. The city has committed significant funding over three years to be allocated toward efforts to promote initiatives aligned with the commitments in the strategic plan. This investment is in excess of \$100 million annually.
  - B. The district has initiated work on distinct strategies within the strategic plan.
    1. Taking steps to assure research-based instructional practices across all schools and content areas, the district has embarked on a multi-year plan toward embedding an Equitable Literacy framework districtwide.
      - a) The 2021-2022 school year has focused primarily on providing school leaders with robust professional development in Equitable Literacy in preparation for anticipated implementation and continued professional learning in schools in the 2022-2023 school year.
      - b) Multiple focus group participants stated that Equitable Literacy has received high buy-in across the district and among school leaders, noting the connection to the strategic plan and strength of the cohesive roll-out, including aligned professional learning. Many interview participants stated that this was the first time in recent memory that BPS has adopted a unifying academic initiative.

2. In 2021, the school committee approved a plan to adopt the MassCore program of studies at its high schools by 2026 to align high school coursework with college and workforce expectations. This was an expectation for BPS within the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BPS and DESE.
  - a) According to focus group participants, the intention of MassCore adoption was to serve Commitment 1 in the strategic plan: eliminate opportunity gaps and achievement gaps.
  - b) Additionally, the school committee and the superintendent have committed to ensuring that MassCore graduation requirements are in place in all BPS high schools by 2026.
3. The district is working toward establishing anti-racist practices.
  - a) The district has committed to using the Boston Public Schools Racial Equity Planning Tool to advance its work toward anti-racist practices by guaranteeing that decision-making is done through a lens of equity.
    - i. The district-developed [Racial Equity Planning Tool \(REPT\)](#) provides a clear six-step process to ensure decision-making processes are aimed at closing opportunity gaps and advancing racial equity. Stakeholder engagement is one of the major planning components and the tool provides detailed information and strategies for engaging a diverse stakeholder group.
    - ii. Interviews with school and district leaders referenced consistent use of the tool in curriculum selection decisions. However, work toward calibrated, full adoption of the tool across the district is in a growth stage (see Challenges and Areas for Growth below).
  - b) Interviewees in multiple focus groups and a review of a document entitled, “School Based Equity Roundtable Handbook,” confirmed the district has incorporated regular and inclusive equity discussions at its schools. Focus group participants spoke positively about the monthly roundtables, which are typically led by school leaders and are intended to include members who reflect the racial, ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic diversity of the school community.
  - c) Focus group participants noted a deliberate effort on the part of the district to recruit and retain staff of color, which has been prioritized by the district through the MOU with DESE. Focus groups reported that structures are in place to support recruitment of educators of color, such as setting diversity hiring goals at each school, and establishing systems to support educators of color through the licensure process and beyond.

4. The district has significantly improved interpretation services to increase family and community access to information and decision making.
  - a) School committee meetings and parent group meetings, such as the Special Education Parents' Advisory Council, are now simultaneously interpreted into nine different languages to increase accessibility for parents and community members.
  - b) A broad range of stakeholders, including parents, consistently communicated vast improvement in interpretation services during public meetings.

**Impact:** The shared, well-communicated, and cohesive vision for the district outlined in the Strategic Plan can serve as an important foundation for the district's improvement efforts. Implementation of several initiatives during the first two years of the strategic plan has been well-planned and positively received by schools and stakeholders. Ensuring execution and follow-through on initiatives underway despite changes in leadership is essential for realizing improved student outcomes.

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

**1. District leaders have not prioritized two BPS functions in crisis. Special education and transportation were identified as critical BPS priorities in the BPS-DESE MOU, yet these functions have stagnated and, in some cases, further deteriorated since 2020. The deficiencies in these areas disproportionately affect many of BPS's most vulnerable students and the district lacks the requisite staff capacity for improvements.**

A. The 2020 District review Report noted that “[the] district’s special education services are in systemic disarray, do not provide appropriate learning opportunities in the least restrictive environment for all students with disabilities, and contribute to a pattern of inequitable access to learning opportunities.” In addition, the same report identified significant “parent frustration with the longstanding and worsening challenge of poor on-time bus performance.” As a result, these issues were prioritized in the district’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DESE.

1. A review of the school committee meeting agendas dating back to April 2020 showed limited discussion on both topics.

a) Special education was included as a separate agenda item only once, in the form of a Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) update at the May 26, 2021 meeting.

b) The transportation contract with TransDev was discussed on five occasions (June 10, 2020; June 24, 2020; June 16, 2021; June 30, 2021; and April 6, 2021). At each of these meetings, the district recommended the extension of TransDev’s contract to continue providing transportation services for the district’s students. In 2020 and 2021, the school committee voted unanimously to approve the contract extension.

B. District oversight in the areas of the special education and transportation remain a critical issue. While a full update on these functions appears later in the report, these departments need systemic reform and there remain no clear pathways to secure this.

1. In the area of Special Education, the district lacks a well-defined special education strategic plan, including a universally accepted definition of inclusion.

2. In the area of transportation, labor contract barriers are enormous. These contracts, three of which are managed by TransDev and are currently expired, include provisions that have significant, negative effects on student arrival time.



**2. The district continues to lack the central office capacity and systems necessary to drive improvement in the 31 lowest performing BPS schools, despite this being a BPS priority identified in the MOU. While these schools have received additional staff and were prioritized for district-wide instructional initiatives, they still lack high-quality targeted improvement plans, sufficient central office support, and accountability for results.**

- A. The district has taken steps to increase access to staffing for Transformation Schools and these schools have participated in district-wide initiatives.
  - 1. Through the Quality Guarantee framework, Transformation Schools have received additional staffing in the form of a social worker, instructional coach, and family liaison.
  - 2. The district’s strategy to improve core instruction through a focus on Equitable Literacy has the potential to support Transformation Schools in improving outcomes for students who historically have been least-well served. Focus group participants noted that there was an expectation that Transformation Schools would have strategies and goals aligned to Equitable Literacy.
  - 3. Schools are prioritized for certain district supports, such as data inquiry coaching by Data Inquiry Facilitators (DIFs). Support from DIFs was often cited by principals and district leaders as valued support for Transformation Schools.
- B. The district does not have adequate systems and staffing in central office to coordinate support for Transformation Schools and ensure the implementation of best practices in school improvement.
  - 1. Since the 2020 report, central office staffing levels continue to decline (from five Transformation Managers down to one), and instability of leadership for the Accountability Office persists. The district continues to lack the capacity to sufficiently support all schools identified as requiring assistance or intervention by the state.
  - 2. The district provided the review team with a document entitled, “District Transformation Strategy.” However, few focus group participants expressed knowledge of this plan, making it unclear to the team whether it is used to specifically guide the work of the district in supporting Transformation Schools.
  - 3. There is no clearly established system in place to align efforts across central office (with Chief of Schools, School Superintendents, Academics, and Operations, for example) to streamline supports or to build the instructional leadership capacity of principals that serve the district’s lowest performing schools, many of whom are new to their positions.

4. The district does not have a reliable system to measure the impact of professional development and staffing investments on student outcomes in Transformation Schools.
    - a) While central office provides professional development for social workers, family liaisons, and transformation coaches, it is unclear through a review of submitted documents and interviewees' responses how the district is specifically measuring the implementation and impact of those positions in Transformation Schools.
- C. Quality School Plans (QSPs) are not leveraged effectively to drive school improvement work, especially in Transformation Schools.
1. QSPs submitted varied in quality, lacked consistent reference to and common measures for equitable literacy outcomes, and often omitted specific Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and/or Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP) targets to measure progress.
  2. Interview and focus group participants referenced multiple plans, often with unaligned strategies and goals, guiding the work of Transformation Schools.
- D. District student assignment policies continue to negatively impact student learning experiences in Transformation Schools. Students with the highest needs are concentrated in struggling schools without equitable and sufficient financial resources.
1. The district's current student funding formula does not provide adequate support to Transformation Schools, resulting in the inability of some schools to provide adequate enrichment experiences for students.
  2. While additional positions are adding much needed capacity, Transformation Schools often need more staff and supports due to greater student need.
  3. Transformation Schools house a disproportionate number of substantially separate special education classrooms compared to non-Transformation Schools and as a result, they have a greater level of student supports to provide.

**Impact:** The district continues to lack sufficient staff and a targeted strategy to provide effective, differentiated supports for its lowest-performing schools. These schools need intensive and specialized supports and resources that appropriately address the individual needs of each school. BPS system-wide policies, such as the student assignment system, continue to perpetuate inequities and challenges for these schools. Without focused action, students in these schools will continue to receive inequitable access to quality education relative to other students in the district.

**3. Leadership instability at the school committee, superintendent, and department level is endemic at BPS and continues to impede district improvement efforts and hamper support for school-level leaders and staff. Rapid leadership turnover in departments serving English learners and students with disabilities, as well as operational departments, is especially concerning.**

A. In February 2022, it was announced that the superintendent would resign in June. At the time of this review, the district was in the process of conducting a search for its fifth superintendent since 2013.

**Table 3: District Superintendents, 2013-Present**

2013-2015	2015-2018	2018-2019	2019-2022	2022
John McDonough (interim)	Tommy Chang, Ed.D.	Laura Perille (interim)	Brenda Cassellius, Ed.D.	TBD

B. Changes in leadership extend above the superintendent to the seven-member school committee, which is currently operating with four new members appointed since 2021 (two of whom were appointed in January 2022).

C. While stability in central office varies by division, stakeholders spoke about the uncertainty created by frequent shifts in roles at central office and noted the delays that this could create in receiving timely information, resources, or support. Stakeholders reported that instability in the Special Education and the Transformation offices have been particularly challenging in making progress.

1. Since the 2020 District Review report, 19 (37 percent) central office leaders have left the district, including several transitions in the Office of English Learners, the Office of Special Education, and the Operations Division.

D. Stakeholders, particularly school leaders, noted that they were often forced to navigate change through relationships they have established rather than relying on systems and structures that could mitigate disruptions, noting this created inequities.

E. Stakeholders noted the challenge that has come with changes in priorities and initiatives when there are changes in leadership. They expressed concern that work on the new strategic plan will not be fully realized with a new superintendent.

F. Although leadership stability has been less variable at the school level than at the district level, changes in school leadership were reported to have negative impacts on student learning experiences, as changes in school leadership directly impact teachers, students, and families. In Transformation Schools, school leadership is less stable, with approximately 40 percent of principals (12 of 31) in their first or second year.

**Impact:** Continued shifts in leadership at the district and school levels can cause disruptions and uncertainty in ongoing work, and anxiety for school staff. Frequent staff turnover limits critical institutional knowledge and perpetuates a constant state of “planning” over effective execution. Effective, stable leadership will be critical for BPS to ensure follow-through on key initiatives.

**4. The district has not yet implemented a robust, district-wide system for tracking implementation progress or measuring outcomes across the six commitments and 40+ priorities outlined in the district’s strategic plan. Some initiatives in the strategic plan are off-track or not yet fully launched and lack project plans and clear timelines for when progress can be expected.**

- A. While there are some systems in place to track the progress toward implementation of the strategic plan, it is unclear to the review team how information on monitoring of the strategic plan is consistently shared beyond central office leadership to inform student-centered action steps.
  - 1. Although district leadership uses a documented work plan tracking tool and dashboard, few interviewees articulated strong knowledge of the system. Although division leaders are accountable for progress related to their departments within the work plan, it is unclear if the dashboard is shared broadly.
  - 2. The district’s Racial Equity Planning Tool is not yet consistently used across the district and interviews and a document review indicated inconsistencies in the use of the tool. It is unclear what processes are in place to make certain the tool is used consistently to ensure diverse stakeholders are authentically engaged in district and school decision-making.
- B. Work toward the commitments contained in the strategic plan is ongoing and at varying levels of progress, with Commitments 1 and 5 identified as those most in need of additional focus by district leadership.
  - 1. Interviewees in many focus groups noted that, “Cultivate Trust” (Commitment 5 of the strategic plan) needed particular attention. Internal and external stakeholders expressed a persistent lack of trust with the district, indicating that work remained in establishing trust inside and outside the district, especially with students and families.
  - 2. Focus group participants reported that progress on the district’s academic agenda has not moved as quickly as expected, and although efforts have been made by the district to regain momentum, more work was needed toward “Eliminate Opportunity and Achievement Gaps” (Commitment 1).

**Impact:** Without implementation of a clear and public system to track progress toward district commitments in the strategic plan, the district will struggle to maintain momentum toward the

execution of challenging goals. This is especially concerning for a district with frequent leadership transitions, where trust is low and concern about the continuity of initiatives is high.

## Recommendations

- Continue to build on the progress and momentum with key initiatives from the district's strategic plan and districtwide adoption of key priorities to support the district vision at the school level. With pending changes in district leadership, it will be vital for the school committee to continue its commitment to the strategic plan and regularly monitor progress on key priorities in partnership with the district.
- Improve the identification of outcome measures. Implement a robust and transparent progress monitoring system to assess the impact of the district's strategic plan. Ensure that this system touches the school-level through Quality School Plans (QSPs) that are of consistent quality and reflect explicit high expectations.
- Continue emerging efforts by district leaders to mitigate the challenges that changes in leadership and personnel create by putting systems in place to preserve and create stability and predictability.
- Consistent with the recommendations in the 2020 District Review Report, address student assignment policies, funding practices, and central office capacity in an effort to proactively support Transformation Schools.
- Continue to direct targeted resources to Transformation Schools through additional and adequate positions identified as necessary for each school. Be deliberate in aligning district supports by requiring evidence of implementation and effectiveness of Equitable Literacy professional development and additional positions. Ensure these are incorporated into the QSPs along with aligned look-fors related to MAP assessment and CRIOP data. Consolidate multiple plans to better guide school improvement efforts in Transformation Schools.

# Curriculum and Instruction

## Contextual Background

### Curriculum

In 2019, the district’s Office of Academics and Professional Learning released a 2019-2020 guidance document identifying available and recommended district curriculum at each subject and gradespan. The guidance indicated that schools should use curriculum from a BPS-approved list, from DESE’s recommendations, or “otherwise demonstrate that their materials meet the rigor and demand of the standards and essentials.” The 2020 Boston District Review cited wide variation in the alignment of recommended curriculum with Ed Reports or DESE’s CURATE, and the review team did not find evidence of a system of monitoring for curriculum and instruction in the district.

Subsequently, using district protocols grounded in its [Racial Equity Planning Tool](#) (REPT), the district vetted ELA/Literacy, math, and science instructional materials for bias, cultural and linguistic responsiveness, and relevance. Based on these reviews, the district created and communicated a list of approved curricula for ELA/Literacy, math, social studies, science and arts in all grades from prekindergarten through grade 12. In early 2022, the district set expectations that school leaders should select curriculum for the 2022-2023 school year from this list; school leaders who wished to use a different curriculum had to follow a required approval process. The district has also indicated that it fully funds school-based purchases of the district’s recommended curricula and has established a multi-year plan to revisit and review curricular materials across content areas and grade levels.

### Instruction

In the 2020 District Review, the Boston Public Schools identified the “Essentials for Instructional Equity” as a tool used to “establish a coherent, research-based vision of instruction and related competencies that, when implemented across BPS, were likely to eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps.” This tool was reviewed and cited favorably in the 2020 District Review; however, wide variation in the use of these practices was observed within the district.

In 2021, the district identified its instructional focus as the following statement: “In BPS, all educators enact the five components of Equitable Literacy instruction so that all students, especially those who have been historically underserved, fully realize their brilliance and become a reader and creator of powerful texts.” In 2021-2022, the Executive Cabinet endorsed a district-wide focus on Equitable Literacy, with a multi-year rollout plan. This vision is captured in the Equitable Literacy “Look Fors” documents, which “describes what the components of Boston Public School’s vision of Equitable Literacy look like in a classroom.” Born out of work with ELA curriculum adoption in Transformation Schools begun in 2019, the work on literacy practices, as reported by district staff, was informed by feedback from teachers and coaches in the Transformation Schools. The district reported that “the Equitable Literacy Implementation and School Leader Professional Learning Teams both supported the

development of this framework, which is heavily influenced by the writing of and our district work with Dr. Alfred Tatum and Dr. Gholdy Muhammad.”

A document review indicated that Equitable Literacy: 1) centers the needs of students who are often underserved, 2) calls on adults to uncover, name and address biases that limit student access to grade level content, and 3) utilize five research-based practices in order to support every learner. The framework references 5 components, often referred to by district stakeholders as “the wheel”: Explicit and Systematic Instruction in the Function of Language; Daily Work with Complex Texts; Explicit Research and Text-based Disciplinary Writing; Intentional Knowledge & Language Activation Across Disciplines; and Daily Work with Enabling Texts. In the 2021-2022 school year, the district began to pilot use of this tool in school-based “learning walks,” with district and school leaders reporting that the tool was used in conjunction with school-based tools or the [Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol](#) (CRIOP) tool.

In summer 2021 the district developed and communicated a three-year rollout plan for the Equitable Literacy Initiative, with a focus on knowledge-building for educators, leaders and instructional leadership teams in the 2021-2022 school year and school-based implementation required for all schools in the 2022-2023 school year.

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

In the 2020 MOU between Boston Public Schools and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the district’s “Priority Initiative #2: Equitable Access to Student Supports” established key metrics of success related to course access and completion. According to the MOU, BPS’s measures of success included:

- “BPS will adopt a MassCore Policy by June 2020, outlining the timeline and necessary steps to implement a uniform high school graduation requirement across all district schools;
- Beginning with all first-time ninth graders in the fall of 2021, BPS will include the completion of MassCore as a graduation requirement;
- BPS will increase the number and percent of underrepresented students enrolled in advanced courses as defined by DESE’s accountability system; and
- BPS will reduce chronic absenteeism across all schools.”



## Strength Findings

**1. The district has made significant investments in initiatives intended to strengthen core instruction – an instructional focus area of equitable literacy and high-quality curriculum adoption – and this work is showing some evidence of impact at the school level, particularly in grades K-8. These items were cited as recommendations for BPS in the 2020 District Review Report.**

A. In summer 2021, the district identified a clearly defined three-year instructional focus, Equitable Literacy, with a multi-year rollout plan; the district is on track to meet Year 1 goals, supported by strong guidance and expectations, district-wide access to aligned professional development.

1. The vision, goals, and expectations of school leaders and educators' roles with implementing Equitable Literacy were clearly articulated in documents from the district and confirmed in interviews with regional superintendents.

a) The district's *Equitable Literacy Overview* effectively outlined the vision and goals of this multi-year, district-wide literacy initiative with three commitments:

- Centering the needs of students who are traditionally underserved
- Ongoing learning and development for adults on the district's [Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices Continuum](#)
- Learning about and implementing five research-based instructional practices across all levels and disciplines.

b) Documentation shared by the district identifies clear Year 1 goals for the Equitable Initiative as follows: "School leaders should be able to "describe the 5 components of equitable literacy instruction; upload artifacts of School Leader and ILT learning about equitable literacy; design an instructional focus for the 2022-2023 school year grounded in Equitable Literacy by June 2022; and produce documents that show that the school leader, in collaboration with the school-based ILT set the conditions for the 2022-2023 school year implementation (structures and resources needed to implement)."

2. In service of these Year 1 goals, memoranda to school leaders clearly stated the roles, expectations, and goals of school leaders in implementing the Equitable Literacy initiative and were cited as helpful resource documents by school leaders in focus groups.

a) An October 2021 memo to school leaders outlined their role in implementing Equitable Literacy in the 2021-2022 school year, with one school superintendent stating that the memo "put all our work together in one package" and brought alignment and coherence to their work across regions:

- The memo clarified the Year 1 goals for the initiative and expectations for principals in service of these goals.
  - In service of the goal of principal and Instructional Leadership Teams (ILT) learning, the memo stated that professional development offered would align with Year 1 goals, focused on building knowledge of principals and ILTs on the science of reading development.
- b) A March 2022 memo, followed by a Principal PD session, further clarified expectations for how leaders should set conditions for implementation in the 2022-2023 school year. It stated the following expectations:
- A requirement that every 2022-2023 school-level Instructional Focus area is grounded in Equitable Literacy
  - A requirement that 15 hours of school-based professional development in every school in 2022-2023 relate to Equitable Literacy
3. The district has made significant investments in professional learning in support of meeting its Year 1 goals of the Equitable Literacy Initiative.
- a) The district has aligned content of required school leader PLCs to the Equitable Literacy focus, ensuring that school leaders participate in learning about equitable literacy and share artifacts of their learning with their supervisors as part of their evaluation.
- b) The district has provided additional aligned PD through district-developed Equitable Literacy Pathway modules, and for those involved in early childhood settings, an [Equitable Early Literacy School Leader Community Professional Learning Communities \(PLC\)](#).
- c) To set conditions for 2022-2023 school year implementation, principals were given the option of selecting school-based professional development sessions (for inclusion in their 2022-2023 school year PD calendar) from a district catalog. In April 2022, the district published the [Equitable Literacy Course Catalog for SY22-23](#), which includes PD offerings aligned with Equitable Literacy, such as Equitable Literacy Learning Series for Early Childhood Paraprofessionals, Equitable Literacy Module: Disciplinary Writing K2-2, Disciplinary Literacy in the Arts (Secondary), Supporting Access for Children with Disabilities, and Introduction to Coaching in Schools. Principals and district leaders reported that principals have wide latitude on how to access this catalog to support their 2022-2023 school year PD calendar.
- d) The district has partnered with publishers of district approved curricula to develop and facilitate curriculum-aligned PD and has invested in Equitable Literacy Coaches who, starting in the 2022-2023 school year, will report to the Executive Director of Equitable

Literacy and provide direct coaching and support at the school level to principals, ILTs and teachers.

4. Interviewees consistently articulated the purpose and key components of the Equitable Literacy Initiative, volunteered positive comments in support of this initiative, and highlighted strong engagement and buy-in from educators.
  - a) Every district administrator and district leader interviewed could speak to the development of Equitable Literacy, identified key components of the framework, and referred to its intended purpose as a means to address disproportionate outcomes for students and bring about equity for all students served, particularly those who have been historically underserved such as Black students, Latinx students, English learners, and students with disabilities.
  - b) In teacher focus groups, all participants could speak to the importance of these particular three components of the Framework: leveraging science of reading to build foundational literacy skills, use of complex grade-level texts every day, and the importance of diverse representation in literature. Not all teachers could yet speak to how equitable literacy fit within their content area.
  - c) In focus groups, all school leaders interviewed were able to speak to three of the five components of equitable literacy, referencing evidence-based foundational skills instruction, student access to complex texts, and access to diverse texts that represent student backgrounds.
  - d) In a teacher focus group, one participant said of the initiative “[it] feels as though it captures everything I want to see in literacy instruction.”
  - e) One district leader admits to being “shocked” at the amount of progress made and attributed the success of the large-scale buy-in to professional learning early in the process and increased collaboration, “touch points,” between central office and school leaders.
  - f) District administrators noted that “there has been significant educator participation in the early phases of the Equitable Literacy roll-out across content and role, starting with a formal launch at the 2021 August Leadership Institute.” In addition, the district submitted a statement stating that “though this year’s professional learning focus was primarily on school leaders and Instructional Leadership Team members, 57 Equitable Literacy learning events were offered in the 2021-2022 school year that enrolled over 1,800 educators (40 percent of the district’s educators).”

- B. The district has vetted and secured high-quality instructional materials to strengthen Tier 1 core instruction and set clear expectations for their use to support the equitable preparation of students for college, career, and life. There has been a high degree of school-level curriculum adoption consistent with district guidelines in pre-kindergarten through grade 8.
1. Beginning in 2020, district educators, with guidance from external partners, began a process to adopt high-quality instructional materials in all content areas to ensure that all students have access to grade level content.
    - a) In ELA/literacy, that process included an [ELA Adoption Priority Questions & Indicators rubric](#).
    - b) In science, the process drew from the *Boston Public Schools Science Instructional Materials Evaluation Rubric*.
    - c) Rubrics used by the district to vet materials provide a clear definition of high-quality instructional materials that is aligned with DESE guidance.
  2. Interviews with district and school leaders referenced consistent use of the [Racial Equity Planning Tool](#) (REPT) in curricular decision-making at both district and school levels.
    - a) The district vetted ELA/literacy, math, and science instructional materials for bias and cultural and linguistic responsiveness, and relevance using a district protocol grounded in the REPT. District leaders referenced the use of the tool in evaluating curriculum before choosing to adopt a specific program or policy.
    - b) School leaders spoke about taking a critical eye and lens when looking at published curricula to ensure it meets the criteria and goals set by the district.
    - c) During interviews multiple school leaders referenced their understanding that this tool would be utilized as part of the district's process for approving curriculum in the 2022-2023.
  3. The district purchased high-quality instructional materials aligned to its recommendations, and clearly and effectively communicated to district and school staff about the adoption of district-approved curricula and an expectation that all schools would use high-quality instructional materials.
    - a) A July 2020 memo from the Office of Academics and Professional Learning to BPS School Leaders outlined their recommendations for K-8 literacy curriculum.

- b) An announcement of the district’s adoption of OpenSciEd (OSE), which includes an FAQ, stated “We envision the full adoption and implementation of OSE in grades 6, 7 & 8 will be completed SY2022-2023.”
  - c) District staff noted they have been clear about the use of district-approved materials: “We expect every school to use high quality instructional materials.”
  - d) Interviews with various school staff confirmed their understanding of district expectations for curricula and is reflected by the following comment: “The district has a buffet of choices...In K-8, there is clarity around which curriculum at which grade levels.”
4. At the prekindergarten through grade 8 level, there are high rates of adoption of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).
- a) The review team asked the district for a summary of materials used in a sample of 42 schools across the district. The results reported by the district in March (although not individually verified by the Department through school visits) are summarized below.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Principals from the 42 schools across the district were asked to submit curriculum used in grades K-8 Literacy/ELA, K-8 Math and 6-8 Science, as this information aligns to the information collected by the state in the 2022 Profiles Submission. The district submitted information for all grades and all subjects, but only K-8 Literacy/ELA, K-8 Math and 6-8 Science are reported here.

**Table 4: Boston Public Schools  
District Self-Report in March 2022 of K-8 ELA/Literacy, K-8 Math and 6-8 Science Curricular Materials  
in a sample of 42 schools across the districts**

Grade level	ELA		Math		Science	
	# Schools Self-Reporting Curriculum Use	% of Curriculum Identified as HQIM	# Schools Self-Reporting Curriculum Use	% of Curriculum Identified as HQIM	# Schools Self-Reporting Curriculum Use	% of Curriculum Identified as HQIM
K0	21	90%	--	--	--	--
K1	28	89%	29	100%	--	--
K2	29	86%	29	100%	--	--
1	29	97%	29	100%	--	--
2	29	93%	29	100%	--	--
3	27	96%	28	100%	--	--
4	26	96%	28	100%	--	--
5	26	96%	28	100%	--	--
6	13	92%	11	64%	12	75%
7	11	82%	11	55%	11	100%
8	11	82%	11	55%	11	100%
9	12	<i>Could not be verified*</i>	10	40%	--	--
10	12	<i>Could not be verified*</i>	10	40%	--	--
11	12	<i>Could not be verified*</i>	10	40%	--	--
12	12	<i>Could not be verified*</i>	8	50%	--	--

\* “Could not be verified” indicates that the majority of school-leaders reported curriculum in-use as “standards-aligned, teacher-created.” Reviewers could not complete an analysis of the teacher created curricular materials, so the designation of “high quality instructional materials” could not be assigned.

- b) Analysis of materials used in the sample of 42 schools, submitted in March 2022, showed the following:
- i. In prekindergarten through grade 2, the district’s *Focus Curriculum* was consistently reported by the surveyed principals as being used in conjunction with district-recommended Phonics programs (Heggerty, Foundations). It was also reported by the district as used consistently across the district. There is considerable evidence that the curriculum is designed intentionally in alignment with criteria for high-quality instructional materials, and the district is working toward a more formal review.
  - ii. In ELA/literacy, nearly all the materials identified for grades 3-8 are considered high quality, per DESE’s definition: Green in both Gateway 1 and Gateway 2 on [EdReports](#)

and/or overall “meets” or “partially meets” on [Curriculum Ratings by Teachers \(CURATE\)](#).

- iii. All math materials reported for kindergarten through grade 5 are considered high quality.
  - iv. In middle school science, OpenSciEd (OSE), for which the district partnered with DESE on a three-year pilot, is considered high quality, and is widely used within the sample surveyed.
5. The district has established a required review and approval process for schools intending to implement instructional materials not on the district’s approved list.
- a) In spring 2022, all principals intending to use curricular materials not approved on the district’s list for the 2022-2023 school year must go through a “[request process](#)” for approval. This process includes using the Racial Equity Planning Tool (REPT). Multiple district leaders discussed knowledge of the process, though they were not sure of all that it entailed.
  - b) Schools must engage in an adoption process similar to that of the central office with their school superintendent, Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), and relevant members of central office.
6. The district has also promoted evidence-based foundational literacy in pre-kindergarten through grade 3 by adopting new expectations, instructional materials, and assessments.
- a) The [Equitable Literacy Instruction in BPS](#) memo articulates the district’s vision for equitable literacy/biliteracy instruction and identifies two sets of district-approved supplemental instructional materials to support Tier 1 [evidence-based early literacy development](#) for pre-kindergarten through grade 3, aligned to guidance in DESE’s MA Literacy Guide. In addition, “explicit and systematic instruction in the function of language” is one of the five components of the district’s [Equitable Literacy Framework](#).
  - b) The district has purchased and implemented a required screening assessment (NWEA MAP) aligned to the [Massachusetts Dyslexia Guidelines](#) and allows for progress monitoring of students in all grades.
  - c) An updated September 2021 memo from the Office of Data and Accountability entitled *SY21-22 BPS Assessment Memo: Strategy and Expectations* requires that PALS/Heggerty (K1) be administered 2x/year and NWEA MAP Fluency (K2-2) be administered 3 times per year.

**Impact:** Simply put: Instructional materials and aligned professional development matter. District investments in providing students access to high-quality instructional materials aligned to the [Massachusetts curriculum frameworks](#), within the context of a clear instructional focus that guides implementation, increase all students' opportunities for more equitable experiences and improved outcomes. This work lays a critical foundation for collaboration across schools, coherence in supports, practices and processes and ongoing, job-embedded professional development to ensure evidence-based, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.

**2. The district has adopted MassCore, the state's recommended program of study intended to align high school coursework with college and workforce expectations, beginning with incoming ninth graders in fall 2022. Adopting MassCore was identified in the BPS-DESE MOU as a priority for BPS. In addition, the district has advanced other initiatives intended to promote equitable access to coursework across the district.**

A. The district has adopted MassCore, the state's recommended program of study, taking an initial and important step to increase rigor and align high school opportunities, expectations, and programming across the district. Since the adoption of this policy, the district has been focused on supporting school leaders to effectively prepare for implementation.

1. The school committee voted to approve the MassCore policy in May 2021, establishing that the incoming ninth graders in the 2022-2023 school year would be the first class required to complete MassCore for graduation in 2026.

2. The district has taken steps to ensure all high schools are prepared to provide incoming 9th graders in Fall 2022 with a course catalog that reflects the MassCore expectations.

a) After a May 2020 MassCore presentation by district leaders to the school committee which noted that, at that time, there were 30 different BPS graduation requirements, the district published a superintendent circular in 2021, outlining the expectations around MassCore adoption for high schools.

b) The district engaged in a collaborative process, led by the Academics Team, to complete a comprehensive course catalog review in spring 2021, with the goal of aligning all course offerings with MassCore requirements.

c) A document review and multiple interviews with district leadership indicated that this process involved collecting every course offering from every high school and determining how current course offerings aligned with MassCore requirements.

d) After this review of high school courses, the district's Academics Team created a course catalog and a system by which the district could evaluate courses across BPS to meet the MassCore criteria in the future.



3. The district is meeting regularly with secondary school leaders to proactively address challenges with implementing MassCore.
  - a) In partnership with MassInsight, district leaders held four “ideation meetings,” group meetings with heads of school and central office leaders, with the goal of addressing implementation obstacles with launching MassCore in Fall 2022.
  - b) The district also launched a series of strategy meetings (“Academic Collaborative Meetings”) with every secondary school leader to communicate expectations and discuss academic readiness and needs for MassCore implementation in the 2022-2023 school year.
    - i. These meetings were held between December 2021 and March 2022 and included members from Academics, Secondary School Superintendents and high school leaders.
    - ii. The district used these meetings to clearly communicate expectations for MassCore implementation to all schools.
    - iii. The district used the Racial Equity Planning Tool (REPT) with every high school. One district leader said that staff have been working to prepare schools and ensure a high level of confidence “that ... every school [is] ready to fully implement with next year’s rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders the [MassCore] policy, so that all of our students actually have access to what DESE and the BPS agree needs to be a sequence of courses that prepare students for the demands of college and career.”
    - iv. The district collected potential implementation challenges during these meetings, including staffing, facility, and budgetary needs by school, in order to prepare for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the 2022-2023 school year.
4. Communication with students and families about MassCore expectations is a near-term next step.
  - a) Interviews with district leadership and a review of timelines presented to the school committee about MassCore indicated that the district was planning a series of events in spring 2022 to help 8th grade students and families understand and effectively prepare for the new high school graduation requirements.
5. The FY23 budget includes \$6.2M to support MassCore adoption.

- a) A presentation by district leaders to the school committee in November 2021, indicated that this money would support new staff hires, professional development, partners, and facilities needs to meet MassCore requirements.
  - b) In addition, the district has made a significant investment of almost \$4 million in high school academic counselors for the 2022-2023 school year to support students in accessing the new requirements.
- B. The district has also launched several other initiatives, with the goal of increasing opportunity and equitable access to coursework for students, particularly those who are or have been historically underserved.
- 1. The district has developed foundational instructional tools that center culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.
    - a) In 2021, the district collaboratively developed the [Equitable Literacy Tool](#) to begin to develop coherence for curriculum and instruction across the district. The tool explicitly references and includes culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.
    - b) The district uses the [Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol](#) (CRIOP) that contains evidence-based practices that are culturally and linguistically sustaining.
  - 2. As noted below in the Financial and Asset Management section of this report, in February 2022, the district outlined the Quality Guarantee framework to ensure certain support services positions were provided to all schools, such as social workers, school nurses, family liaisons, guidance counselors, and librarians.
  - 3. The district has invested funds and resources in the creation of educational programs consistent with the language of the LOOK Act.
    - a) The LOOK Act (2018) creates opportunities for districts to implement dual-language education programs “designed to promote bilingualism and biliteracy, cross-cultural competency and high levels of academic achievement for both native English speakers and English learners from a single language background”
    - b) The district operates a Spanish dual language high school (Margarita Muniz Academy); the first Haitian Creole dual-language program (Mattahunt Elementary); an ASL dual-language school (Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing); a Vietnamese dual-language program (Mather Elementary); as well as four Spanish dual-language schools (Hernandez K-8, Hurley K-8, Greenwood K-8, and Umana K-8).

- c) Multiple interviews indicated that work has begun to align expectations of dual-language programs with the focus on Equitable Literacy, including district-wide recommendations for adoption of a K2-8 Literacy Curriculum (ARC).
  - d) The district plans to implement funds and resources in the Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education to expand bilingual programs to include dual-language, transitional bilingual education, and heritage-language course offerings across the district.
  - e) The district has proposed to invest \$7.7 million in federal relief (ESSER) funds in infrastructure to increase native-language programming toward the Seal of Biliteracy; the proposal for these funds includes adopting culturally responsive materials for dual-language programs and increasing access to heritage language programs.
4. To date, the district operates over 30 sections of ethnic studies courses across the system.
- a) This includes approximately 10 sections of the Introduction to Ethnic Studies course (across six different high schools). The district reports that each class “appears to have enrollment in the range of 12-31 students.”
  - b) In addition, the district offers more than 20 sections of various courses in African-American and Chicano Studies as well as a Native Culture course across 14 different BPS high schools with student enrollment in the range of 11-32 students per section.

**Impact:** Adopting MassCore is an initial and important step for Boston Public Schools to provide a clear program of study for BPS graduates starting with the class of 2026. Many of the plans described in this section are still in the planning, launch or pilot phase; therefore, the full impact of these policies is not yet known. However, if launched with strong implementation and support from the district, these changes have the potential to elevate the rigor and equitable access to courses for all students, with a particular focus on elevating opportunities for Black, Latinx, English learners and students with disabilities.

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

### **1. Despite initial progress in establishing an instructional focus for the district, there is variation in school-level implementation of its instructional priorities and the district has not yet fully established systems to monitor quality implementation.**

- A. Although many schools have adopted district-recommended, high-quality instructional materials, implementation at the school level is inconsistent.
  - 1. In focus groups, teachers noted that they had the autonomy and flexibility to adapt curriculum if the current curriculum did not meet the needs of their students or did not sufficiently address cultural competency.
  - 2. However, interviews with teachers and principals indicated that they had various perceptions of how to “adapt” and be “critical consumers of the curriculum”; and teachers and principals did not reference specific guidelines on how best to adapt materials to meet the needs of all students, while maintaining rigor.
  - 3. The district has not provided clear definitions and examples of what it means to “adapt and supplement materials/instruction based on individual student needs” in a way that maintains the rigor of the curriculum. District staff acknowledged that this was a challenge and would need to be addressed in the next phase of work.
    - a) District staff members stated that their focus had been on setting clear curriculum expectations and described “a lack of coherence in individual schools’ use of the curriculum.”
    - b) One district leader said that there was a “gap between the intended versus what was taught” in the adopted curriculum and suggested that the district was ready to “move from what you are teaching to how do you teach it well.”
- B. The district plans to continue with its implementation of the Equitable Literacy framework in the 2022-2023 school year and beyond; implementation will rely on additional school-level professional development (PD). However, schools’ use of district-wide PD offerings and prioritization of school-level coaching and collaboration time for Equitable Literacy varies significantly by school, and the district has not yet built systems to monitor implementation effectively.
  - 1. While the district provides and communicated professional development and other resources (scope and sequences, aligned interim assessments), interviews with teachers and school leaders indicated that the use of school-based PD and coaching to ensure effective implementation varied across schools.

- a) Educators reported different levels of participation in professional learning from the district course catalog aligned to the Equitable Literacy framework.
  - b) School leaders embed curriculum-specific professional development and coaching at the school level in various ways. Some district leaders and principals spoke of using Professional Learning Community (PLC) time for educators to unpack curriculum that they were implementing in their schools, but they did not reference a consistent or recommended job-embedded professional development model for implementation of curricular materials.
2. The district has identified implementation of Equitable Literacy PD at the school level as an area of focus for the 2022-2023 school year; however, it does not have a system to monitor the quality of this professional learning and its impact on students.
- a) To build capacity district-wide in implementation of the Equitable Literacy framework, principals are expected to identify a school-level instructional focus for the 2022-2023 school year aligned with the framework; they are expected to use 15 hours of school-based professional learning in service of this aligned instructional focus.
  - b) When asked how the effectiveness of how district and school Equitable Literacy PD was measured, multiple district staff referenced post-session surveys but could not describe a plan to monitor the impact of professional learning across the district. Initial work on understanding the impact on student outcomes may be taking place in the Early Childhood office, as one district leader noted an ongoing integrity study of early childhood professional learning.
  - c) School leaders and school superintendents referenced a March 2022 principal meeting in which expectations were conveyed and noted that it had been announced that more details would be provided to school leaders in April 2022, but they did not describe a consistent process for school leadership teams and ILTs to receive support or feedback in the development of a high-quality school-based professional development plan.
- C. While school leaders noted support provided by regional school superintendents as a point of progress, the district still lacks a clearly scoped role-clarity or accountability mechanisms for school superintendents to work with members of the Academics and Professional Learning team, and members of the Office of Transformation to coordinate effective supports to schools.
1. Central office administrators and focus groups of principals and school superintendents all identified the role of the school superintendent as crucial instructional support; however, stakeholders had inconsistent perspectives on the role and responsibilities of the school superintendent.

- a) School principals expressed strong appreciation for the support provided by school superintendents in many different domains of work.
  - b) School and district leaders consistently described the role of the school superintendent as intended to build instructional leadership capacity. This is consistent with the district's formal position description. However, they also noted that school superintendents were often drawn into resolving operational issues that detracted from this focus.
  - c) School superintendents described their roles as multi-faceted and noted that while they had a strong desire to focus on instructional leadership, they also noted that there were numerous operational responsibilities that made this focus challenging.
2. It is not clear how school superintendents are held accountable in their efforts to support school leaders and improve student outcomes, or how the school superintendent role should work with central office Academic or Transformation Office staff to provide support to schools.
- a) A document review indicated that school superintendent evaluations were not aligned to the position description and the instructional support role as described by school and district leaders. It was unclear how or if school superintendents have been held accountable for student outcomes in their assigned schools.
  - b) Different members of the Office of Academics expressed different ways, often informal, that they worked with school superintendents to support schools. Members of the Office of Transformation and the Office of Academics named different ways that they worked with school superintendents and principals, sometimes leveraging different tools and frameworks.

**Impact:** The district has increased the access and availability of high-quality curricula and equitable literacy practices for all schools across the district, but expectations vary across the district on what successful implementation looks like. Without consistent delivery of effective, rigorous instruction in all grades and subjects, clear communication of expectations, and professional development the district cannot achieve its goal of closing achievement gaps for historically marginalized student groups.

**2. Despite progress made in planning for the rollout of a district-wide instructional focus, the instructional quality and equitable access to advanced coursework at the high school level remains a challenge. Expectations for instruction, including use of high-quality curricular materials and alignment with the district’s instructional focus, are insufficiently defined for the district’s high schools. While MassCore adoption will support improved student outcomes over time, access to consistent graduation standards and advanced coursework remains highly inequitable across student groups.**

A. Although the district has made strides in recommending high-quality instructional materials K-8, adoption of high-quality instructional materials at the high school level is not consistent.

1. An analysis of curriculum materials used across 42 schools submitted in March 2022 (including 12 high schools) found that for most English language arts and mathematics high school courses, the curriculum in use at the school level did not meet DESE criteria for “high-quality” or was teacher-developed (noted as “standards aligned, teacher-designed”) and therefore unable to be reviewed.
2. Several district leaders noted that despite increased adoption of high-quality instructional materials in kindergarten through grade 8, curricular adoption and use at the high-school level often varies greatly school by school.
3. In a focus group, high-school teachers reported designing their own curriculum using various methods: developing inquiry-based essential questions, using curriculum created by school-based teams, and pulling multiple resources together to develop curriculum for classes.

B. Understanding and implementation of the district's instructional focus, the Equitable Literacy framework varies greatly at the high-school level.

1. In multiple focus groups, levels of understanding and perspectives on Equitable Literacy varied among high-school teachers.
  - a) Several educators highlighted Equitable Literacy as the district’s instructional focus and could speak to how it has applied to their classrooms.
  - b) Others did not have a clear understanding of the district’s focus on Equitable Literacy or how it currently applied to their classrooms and content areas. Several teachers expressed a desire to learn more about how it could be applied to their classrooms and content areas.
  - c) A review of the 2022-2023 professional development course catalog indicated that the district planned to expand its professional development offerings for secondary equitable literacy in the 2022-2023 school year.

- d) Several district leaders noted the need to deepen the work around what Equitable Literacy looked like across high-school disciplines and make further connections between Equitable literacy and disciplinary literacy.
- C. Across the district, student access to consistent graduation standards and advanced coursework remains highly inequitable across student groups.
- 1. Disparate coursework offerings and graduation requirements across high schools has led to unequal access to opportunities and disparate outcomes. Effective implementation of the district's new MassCore policy is a critical step towards improving these outcomes and creating a more equitable high-school experience and opportunities.
    - a) According to the 2020-2021 school year MassCore Completion Report, [37.2 percent of Boston Public School graduates completed MassCore](#), compared to [83.2 percent of high school graduates statewide](#). Of BPS graduates in the 2020-2021 school year, 21 percent of students with disabilities and 21 percent of English learners completed the MassCore, compared to 74.2 percent and 62.3 percent in the state, respectively.
    - b) The May 2021 MassCore policy presentation to the school committee states that as of the 2019-2020 school year, only 2 of 35 high schools had met at least 50% of the graduates meet the MassCore graduation requirements.
  - 2. The percentage of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders completing Advanced Placement (AP) courses and advanced coursework more generally is uneven across student groups in the district.
    - a) In the 2020-2021 school year, the percentage of [11th and 12th graders completing advanced courses](#) differed by race: 82.7 percent of white students and 89.3 percent of Asian students completed advanced courses, while 56.4 percent of African American/Black and 52 percent of Hispanic or Latino students completed advanced courses.
    - b) In addition, only 32.7 percent of English learners and 36.7 percent of students with disabilities completed advanced courses, compared to 61.6 percent of all students in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
    - c) Although advanced coursework completion remains uneven across student groups, all student groups have seen an increase in advanced coursework completion over the past four years. White students had the greatest increase and English learners had the smallest increase in completion of advanced coursework. See the table below:



**Table 5: Boston Public Schools Advanced Coursework Completion 2018-2021**

Student Group	% 11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> Graders Completing Advanced Coursework by Year				Change 2018-2021
	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Asian	78.1	85.9	85.7	89.3	+11.2
White	68.5	80.5	77.7	82.7	+14.2
Black	44.0	51.3	51.4	56.4	+12.4
Hispanic or Latino	45.9	55.2	48.5	52.0	+6.1
English learners	26.7	29.3	27.6	32.7	+6.0
Students w/disabilities	23.5	35.4	34.4	36.7	+13.2

\*Source: Advanced Coursework Completion: [Advanced Coursework Completion - Boston \(00350000\)](#)

**Impact:** A lack of clear instructional expectations and uneven use of high-quality instructional materials across BPS’s 35 high schools leads to inequitable access and opportunities for all students, and ultimately fails to ensure all graduates are prepared for college, career, and life. Effective implementation of the district’s new MassCore policy will improve outcomes in this area over time, but all students are not yet experiencing equitable access to consistent graduation standards or rigorous coursework across the district. English learners and students with disabilities remain particularly disadvantaged.

**3. The quality of organizational and instructional practices observed in observed classrooms were primarily rated in the middle range, indicating that classroom practices associated with improved outcomes were evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. In general, classroom organizational practices and student engagement practices received higher ratings than those practices related to instructional support.** (Note: The classroom observations were conducted by the American Institutes of Research (AIR) and this finding is based on their report. A detailed summary of the classroom observation findings can be found in Appendix D.)

A. During the week of March 28, 2022, observers from AIR visited BPS classrooms to conduct observations. This team collected data using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), a research-based observation method that measures interactions between students and teachers that are associated with improved outcomes. The observers conducted 477 observations in a sample of classrooms across 42 schools. Observations were conducted in kindergarten through grade 12 and focused primarily on literacy, English language arts, and mathematics instruction.

1. The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) was developed by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia. Three levels of CLASS Manuals were used: K–3, Upper Elementary, and Secondary. The K–3 tool was used to observe kindergarten through grade 3, the Upper Elementary tool was used to observe grades 4–5, and the Secondary tool was used to observe grades 6–12.

2. The CLASS protocol examines 10–11 classroom dimensions related to 3 or 4 domains, depending on grade level: emotional support, classroom organization, instructional support, and student engagement. Each observed classroom is scored on a 7-point scale for every dimension.
  - a) **Emotional Support:** Reflects the emotional connection between teachers and students, the overall level of expressed negativity in the classroom, teachers’ awareness of and responsiveness to students’ academic and emotional needs, and the degree to which interactions emphasize students’ point of view and encourages responsibility and autonomy.
  - b) **Classroom Organization:** Encompasses teachers’ ability to provide clear behavioral expectations and effective redirection methods, how well teachers manage instructional time, and ways in which teachers maximize students’ interest and engagement.
  - c) **Instructional Support:** Examines the depth of lesson content and approaches teachers use to help students comprehend key ideas, the degree to which students are engaged in higher-level thinking, teachers’ use of feedback to expand and extend learning, and the purposeful use of content-focused discussion.
  - d) **Student Engagement:** Degree to which students are focused and participating in the learning activity, with an emphasis on active rather than passive engagement.
  
3. The K–3 protocols include 10 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in the table below).

**CLASS K-3 Domains and Dimensions**

Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
Positive Climate Negative Climate Teacher Sensitivity Regard for Student Perspective	Behavior Management Productivity Instructional Learning Formats	Concept Development Quality of Feedback Language Modeling

4. The Upper Elementary (grades 4 and 5) and Secondary (grades 6-12) protocols include 11 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in the table below), in addition to Student Engagement.

**CLASS Upper Elementary and Secondary Domains and Dimensions**

<b>Emotional Support</b>	<b>Classroom Organization</b>	<b>Instructional Support</b>
Positive Climate Teacher Sensitivity Regard for Student Perspectives	Behavior Management Productivity Negative Climate	Instructional Learning Formats Content Understanding Analysis and Inquiry Quality of Feedback Instructional Dialogue

5. When conducting a visit to a classroom, the observer rates each dimension (including Student Engagement) on a scale of 1 to 7.
- a) **Low Rating:** A rating of 1 or 2 indicates that the dimension was never or rarely evident during the visit.
  - b) **Middle Rating:** A rating of 3, 4, or 5 indicates that the dimension was evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students.
  - c) **High Rating:** A rating of 6 or 7 indicates that the dimension was reflected in all or most classroom activities and in a way that included all or most students.

B. Across all grade levels, there were higher ratings related to classroom organization and lower ratings related to instructional support. Below is the average domain rating by grade span:

**Table 6: Average Domain Rating by Grade Span in Observed Schools**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Grades K-5*</b>	<b>Grades 6-8</b>	<b>Grades 9-12</b>
Emotional Support	5.5	4.7	4.6
Classroom Organization	5.9	6.0	6.4
Instructional Support	4.0	3.9	3.9
Student Engagement**	5.6	5.2	5.2

\*Note that some dimensions only apply to K-3 or upper elementary, grades 4-5.

\*\*Includes grades 4-12 only.

1. Dimensions within the **Emotional Support domain** were, on average, mostly rated in the middle range; however, ratings for the Negative Climate dimension were in the high range for all grade bands, indicating an absence of negative climate. Ratings in the Emotional Support domain were higher in grades K-5 (5.5) and lower in grades 6-8 (4.7) and 9-12 (4.6).
2. Dimensions within the **Classroom Organization domain** received a mix of middle- and high-range ratings. The average scores for Classroom Organization were the highest domain across all grade levels: grades K-5 (5.9), grades 6-8 (6.0), and grades 9-12 (6.4).
3. Dimensions within the **Instructional Support domain** were rated, on average, in the middle range. Average ratings in observed classrooms included: grades K-5 (4.0), grades 6-8 (3.9)

and grades 9-12 (3.9). The Instructional Support domain, on average, had the lowest ratings across grade spans.

4. Dimensions within the **Student Engagement domain** were rated in the middle and high range. Average ratings in observed classrooms included: grades 4-5 (5.6), grades 6-8 (5.2) and grades 9-12 (5.2).
5. The average ratings for dimensions within the **Instructional Support domain** varied by dimension and across grade bands. The highest average rated dimension across all grade spans is “Instructional Learning Formats” (5.0). The lowest instructional support dimension is “Analysis and Inquiry” (3.4).

**Table 7: Average Instructional Support Domain Ratings**

Instructional Support Domain	Average Rating by Grade Span				Average Rating Across All Grade Spans
	Grades K–3	Grades 4–5	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12	
Instructional Learning Formats*	5.3		4.9	4.6	5.0
Concept Development**	3.7	*	*	*	3.7
Content Understanding	*	4.5	4.0	4.1	4.2
Analysis and Inquiry	*	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4
Quality of Feedback	4.2		3.7	3.8	4.0
Instructional Dialogue	*	4.0	3.3	3.7	3.6
Language Modeling**	4.1	*	*	*	4.1

\* Instructional Learning Formats appears in the Classroom Organization Domain for grades K-3, but in the Instructional Support Domain for grades 4-5.

\*\*Concept Development and Language Modeling are in grades K-3 only.

**Impact:** When elements related to effective instruction are not present in all classrooms and for all students, the district cannot attain equitable student outcomes aimed at closing achievement gaps. The result is students are not consistently prepared for their continued education within BPS and not prepared for success in college or career.

## Recommendations

- Continue with the multi-year Equitable Literacy plan, with a focus on ensuring coherence-building, implementation support, and progress monitoring systems are in place across all schools, grade levels, subject areas, and special programs. Clarify expectations and recommend support structures for adapting curriculum to meet needs of students and implement it in a culturally responsive manner that maintains the rigor of the materials. Finally, codify processes for supporting schools that have adopted curricula that does not align with district recommendations.
- Clearly define expectations for curriculum and instruction at the high school level, in alignment with the district’s strategic plan, to ensure detailed plans have an impact on student opportunity and achievement. Continue to invest in implementation of an initial secondary-level academic strategy, including MassCore alignment and “core 4” programming, which should be codified in a timeline and implementation plan that aligns expectations, funding and resources to this strategy. Leverage voices of stakeholders such as families, students, educators and school leaders, to surface concerns around allocation of resources and support needed for implementation and ensure these are incorporated into the plan. Ensure that the strategy and the plan are clearly communicated to stakeholders, including creating clear expectations for school-level implementation.
- Clearly define the relationships between the roles of School Superintendents, members of the Academics and Professional Learning team (Academics), and members of the Office of Transformation (Transformation), to ensure principals and schools receive support in developing and implementing strong QSPs and school-based Professional Development plans, as well as implementing the district’s instructional focus.

## Resources

- [Quick Reference Guide: The Case for Curricular Coherence](#) describes three types of curricular coherence that support student learning: vertical coherence, aligned tiers of instruction, and cross-subject coherence.
- [DESE’s OPTIC: Online Platform for Teaching and Informed Calibration](#) is a professional development tool supporting Massachusetts educators to refine a shared understanding of effective, standards-aligned instructional practice and high-quality feedback.
- [DESE’s Calibration Video Library & Protocols](#) is a collection of professionally created videos of classroom instruction produced by the School Improvement Network, along with sample training protocols and activities. These videos depict a range of practice—this is not a collection of exemplars—to support within-district calibration activities that promote a shared understanding of instructional quality and rigor.

- [DESE's Text Inventory Handbook](#) guides school and district leaders through an inventory process designed to gather information about the texts students encounter in grades 9–12.
- [Jobs for the Future's Common Instructional Framework](#), a core component in Early College Designs for schools, contains six powerful teaching and learning strategies to build college readiness.
- [Increasing Access to Advanced Coursework](#) describes how school districts can use the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to expand access to advanced coursework and increase students' achievement in these courses.
- [DESE's My Career and Academic Plan \(MyCAP\)](#) is a student-centered, multi-year planning tool designed to provide students with ongoing opportunities to plan for their academic, personal/social and career success.
- [DESE's High Quality College and Career Pathways Initiative](#) serves as an overarching strategy for significantly expanding student access to high-quality career pathways
- [The Middle College National Consortium](#) provides resources to support increasing the number of high-school students who have access to early colleges, middle colleges, and dual enrollment.
- To support districts in the analysis of their data, the Department also continued to refine the [CTE Analysis and Review Tools \(CTE ART\)](#) and associated [guidance](#).

# Student Support

## Contextual Background

### Support for Students with Disabilities

The [Boston Public Schools District Review Report](#) published in March 2020, states that “special education services are in systemic disarray”, specifically pointing out that the district does not provide the least restrictive environment for all students with disabilities. The report also notes:

1. In the 2018-2019 school year, the percentage of students in substantially separate classrooms was more than twice that of the state rate.
2. The district has 12 categories of substantially separate strands across the district; it is a system that prevents students from accessing high-quality inclusive instruction.
3. Students often need to transfer to another school in order to access a less restrictive setting.
4. The majority of the strands for high schools are located in open enrollment schools.
5. The district lacks a shared policy on inclusion; as a result, various models of inclusion and inclusive settings exist in different school buildings.
6. A lag in progress to increase inclusive learning environments.
7. The district struggles with the provision of services to students with disabilities.

Since the release of the 2020 report, various events have transpired related to the delivery of special education services in the district, and they are summarized below.

### *Memorandum of Understanding*

First, Boston Public Schools and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education entered into a Memorandum of Understanding in March 2020 that includes as a priority initiative the improvement of educational services to students with disabilities. More specifically, Section 3.2 of the MOU states “BPS will undertake a reconstruction of its special education services and placement options, thereby increasing the percentage of students with disabilities that are served in the least restrictive environment and reducing the disproportionate placement in substantially separate programs of students of color.” In May 2021, the parties agreed to a Fourth Amendment to the MOU which includes the following targets: The 2022 target for the percentage of students with disabilities educated in partial and full inclusion was set at 65.9% or higher for the combined rate. The 2022 target for the percentage of students of color placed in substantially separate programs was set at 29.5% or lower.

### *Tiered Focused Monitoring*

In May 2021, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted a [Tiered Focused Monitoring Review](#) of Boston Public Schools. A Final Report, issued August 24, 2021,

focused on areas of concern relative to special education and civil rights. Of note, the review team found a lack of inclusive opportunities for students within the special education continuum of alternative services and placements. Specifically, during the 2020-2021 school year:

- Approximately 63.9 percent of students ages 6-21 were in full inclusion or partial inclusion placements, a rate lower than the state rate at approximately 79.9 percent.
- Approximately 29.6 percent of eligible students ages 6-21 were enrolled in substantially separate placements, a rate more than twice that of the state at approximately 13.5 percent.

The review team also found high rates of placements of eligible students of color ages 6-21 in substantially separate programs:

- African American students: 36.3 percent
- Hispanic students: 27.3 percent
- Asian students: 30.0 percent
- White students: 19.5 percent

The Tiered Focused Monitoring Report includes a total of 19 findings of non-compliance in special education, as well as one finding of non-compliance in civil rights related to the district-wide implementation of the curriculum accommodation plan and the provision of appropriate services and supports in the general education setting.

#### *Office of Special Education Strategic Plan Development Tool*

Recently, Boston Public Schools drafted the *Office of Special Education Strategic Plan Development Tool* (Development Tool) as a plan for improving access to inclusive classrooms for students with disabilities. The Development Tool includes seven strategic priority areas focusing on the district's vision, including the creation of a special education system driven by student need:

1. Recovery Initiatives
2. Student Achievement and Teacher Expertise
3. Develop a Needs Based System
4. Increase Opportunities for Inclusion for All Students with Disabilities
5. Improve Supports for Students with Emotional Impairments
6. English Language Learners with Disabilities
7. Ensure Appropriate Setting

The Development Tool is currently in draft form and was developed with input from stakeholders, such as principals, families, and the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC).

#### *Schools Establish New Inclusion Services*



During the 2020-2021 school year, five schools within the district began working toward implementing new models of inclusion. The five schools are:

1. Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary School
2. Curley K-8
3. Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School
4. Mozart Elementary School
5. Paul A. Dever Elementary School<sup>2</sup>

### *Equitable Access to High-Quality Schools*

The 2020 District Review described challenges related to school choice and assignment, particularly noting that, “The district’s school choice and assignment systems contribute to systemic barriers to equity, limiting student access to high-quality schools, especially at the high-school level.” To begin to create more equitable access to exam high schools, the district has changed the admissions policy for its Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School, and John D. O’Bryant School of Math and Science. There are two interim admissions policies in place for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 and the permanent policy will be implemented for all subsequent school years.

To establish the policy currently in place, the superintendent formed a working group that met 13 times during the summer and fall of 2020 to develop an initial recommendation for modifying the exam school admissions policy. They recommended a modification to the exam school admissions policy for students admitted to the school for the 2021-2022 school year, so that students were not required to take an entrance exam, and instead were admitted based on criteria that included grades, MCAS scores, and neighborhood of residence. The superintendent accepted this recommendation, and the school committee voted its approval on October 21, 2020. The change in the exam school admissions policy resulted in an increase of admissions of economically disadvantaged students in grades 7 and 9 from 33 percent in the 2020-2021 school year to 48 percent in 2021-2022. Similarly, the percentage of admissions of Black students grew by 6 percent and Latinx students by 4 percent for 2021-2022 in grades 7 and 9.

On July 14, 2021, the school committee voted on the exam schools’ admission policy for 2022-2023 and beyond. This new policy involves two phases of implementation (Phase 1 is for the 2022-2023 school year and Phase 2 is for all remaining years while the policy is in effect). For the 2022-2023 school year, the admission is based upon grade point average, attestation that the student is “performing at grade level based upon the Massachusetts Curriculum Standards,” and additional points are provided to students experiencing homelessness, in the care of the Department of Children and Families, or living in housing owned by the Boston Housing Authority, and students from schools that have historically served high percentages of economically disadvantaged students.

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<sup>2</sup> The Paul A. Dever School has been designated as Chronically Underperforming and is led by its receiver, School & Main Institute, which reports to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. The inclusion effort at this school has been guided by School & Main Institute in conjunction with the Boston Public Schools.

While it is too soon to determine what the impact of the new policy will be, it is notable that the district and school committee have taken steps toward creating a more equitable admissions policy for the district's three exam schools.

The district has also taken steps to improve the quality of all schools in the district through policy and funding decisions.

### **Support for English Learners**

#### *2010 DOJ Settlement Agreement*

Since 2010, the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education have overseen BPS efforts to correct several issues related to the education of English learners in the district. These include the accurate identification of ELs, monitoring English language development, and provision of appropriate services and instruction by qualified educators to ELs. The district agreed to this oversight by the federal government as part of the Settlement Agreement of 2010 and the Successor Settlement Agreement in 2012.

#### *2017 Tiered Focused Monitoring*

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) conducted a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review (TFM) of the district's English learner education (ELE) programs in 2017. DESE's key findings from this report included district noncompliance in the areas of ELE programming and structure, educator licensure, and language support for families who preferred to communicate with the district in their home language. In January 2019, DESE approved the progress the district made in the areas of noncompliance identified during the Tiered Focus Monitoring review conducted in 2017.

#### *2020 Memorandum of Understanding*

In the 2020 Memorandum of Understanding, improving services to English learners was identified as a "Long-term initiative" for the district. As stated in the MOU, "BPS and DESE agree that in addition to the priority initiatives identified in paragraphs 2-3, they will each be responsible for a long-term initiative. The BPS long-term initiative will be to develop a plan for improving services to English learners and improve interpretation and translation services for limited English proficient parents and guardians." Through the 2020-2021 school year, under the leadership of Dr. Sylvia Romero-Johnson, the Office of English Learners (OEL) within the Boston Public Schools conducted stakeholder engagement within the district and contracted with the organization WestEd to develop a "Roadmap for Quality Education for Multilingual Learning," which was drafted in June 2021.

Through the fall of 2021, OEL began the process of revising the Roadmap, incorporating feedback from the BPS English Learner Task Force. After Dr. Romero-Johnson left the district in summer 2021, Dr. Aketa Narang Kapur took on leadership of the office in late fall. In early 2022, Farah Assiraj, Deputy Chief

Academic Officer, took on interim leadership of the office. Under Ms. Assiraj’s leadership, the Office of English Learners was renamed the Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education, and the Roadmap was revised and renamed as a Strategic Plan for Multilingual Learners; Ms. Assiraj presented a draft overview of the revised document to the Boston Public Schools English Learner Task Force in March 2022. The presentation projects the expansion of dual-language and transitional bilingual education programs, and the development of a compliance platform that will enhance the district’s ability to monitor ELE services at the school level. The district plans to invest financially in the strategic plan, including expansion of positions at the central office, including a bilingual assessment coordinator, multilingual instructional coaches, and a data analyst.

*2021-2022 Compliance*

As a result of the settlement agreement with the DOJ, the district submits quarterly reports on its compliance with particular terms of the agreement. Data submitted with the October 1 district report to the DOJ indicated that the district’s level of compliance included 56 percent of ELs correctly grouped for all English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. The district reported that “30% of the secondary students who were not receiving appropriate services had no data entry or incorrect data entry,” due to the struggle many schools went through to input their service data in the district’s student data management system, Aspen. The district committed to collaborative work between the OEL team, school leadership, and the Language Assessment Team Facilitators (LATFs) at the school level to ensure accuracy in reporting and compliance. The data from the October, December and March reports are below.

The table below is excerpted from the Boston Public Schools’ report submitted to the DOJ in March 2022.

**Table 8: Boston Public Schools Compliance Levels for English Learners**

<b>Compliance Category</b>	<b>October 2021</b>	<b>December 2021</b>	<b>March 2022</b>
% of ELs whose ESL Courses have an Approved Instruction Type	73%	86%	88%
% of ELs whose Teachers of ESL are All ESL Certified	80%	91%	93%
% of ELs who are Receiving the Appropriate Amount of Weekly ESL Minutes	76%	89%	92%
% of ELs who are Correctly Grouped for All ESL Courses	56%	84%	85%

The table below indicates the number and percentage of English learners receiving appropriate services, submitted from the Boston Public Schools to the DOJ in March 2022.

**Table 9: English Learners Receiving Appropriate ESL Services**

	Elementary			Secondary			TOTAL		
	Total # ELs	# ELs Receiving ESL Services	% ELs Receiving ESL Services	Total # ELs	# ELs Receiving ESL Services	% ELs Receiving ESL Services	Total # ELs	# ELs Receiving ESL Services	% ELs Receiving ESL Services
Correct ESL Instructional Type and Licensed Teacher	6,393	6,095	95%	5,108	3,671	72%	<b>11,501</b>	<b>9,766</b>	<b>85%</b>
Correct Type, Minutes, and Teacher	6,393	5,940	93%	5,108	3,384	66%	<b>11,501</b>	<b>9,324</b>	<b>81%</b>
Correct Type, Minutes, Teacher, and Grouping	6,393	5,818	91%	5,108	2,685	53%	<b>11,501</b>	<b>8,503</b>	<b>74%</b>

Compliance with the successor agreement is monitored by the U.S. DOJ and is therefore not included in the descriptions of strengths and challenges in this report.

## Findings

The findings for the Student Support section have been divided into three sections: Special Education, English Learners, and Other Student Support findings.

### Special Education

#### *Challenges and Areas for Growth*

1. **The district has demonstrated a lack of urgency in improving special education services, failing to make discernable progress in this area despite repeated DESE findings and a commitment by BPS in the MOU to address special education. The district’s special education services remain in systemic disarray, lack consistent policies and procedures, and do not consistently provide appropriate learning opportunities in the least restrictive environment for all students with disabilities.**
  - A. The district has shown a lack of urgency and unified commitment for developing and implementing a plan to address the lack of inclusion opportunities and the disproportionate placement of students of color in substantially separate settings.
    1. At the time of this review, the “Development Tool,” which includes the district’s vision for special education, was in draft form and did not propose short-term objectives that address the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the disproportionate placement of students of color in substantially separate settings. In addition, the Development Tool sets forth an excessively long timeline for implementation, which further indicates the lack of urgency to address inclusion opportunities for students with disabilities.
    2. The district does not have a clear plan for finalizing the Development Tool and committing to next steps. Interviewees expressed widely varying viewpoints on the steps the district should take to increase inclusion opportunities and decrease the disproportionate placement of students with disabilities in substantially separate settings, which demonstrated the lack of shared agreement and commitment to increasing inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities.
      - a) Without a clear and cohesive plan, isolated improvement initiatives – such as professional development for Coordinators of Special Education (COSE) – are unlikely to increase inclusion opportunities for students with disabilities.
    3. The Development Tool describes attempts to increase inclusion but does not satisfactorily describe how to address the disproportionate placement of black and brown students in substantially separate placements.

B. The district has not developed a district-wide policy on inclusion that clearly outlines specific models for high-quality inclusive education.

1. The district lacks a standard policy on inclusion. Several interviewees reported that the district defines an inclusion student as one whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) calls for receiving 240 or more minutes of special education services in a general education classroom. Specifically, the Boston Public Schools *Special Education Program Codes* document notes the following code definitions:

- **Inclusion:** 240-300 minutes of service provided in an inclusion setting
- **Substantially separate:** 240-300 minutes of service provided in a substantially separate setting

DESE uses percentages of student learning time, not a specific set of minutes, to define placement settings for students with disabilities. For example, the Department defines full inclusion as the provision of IEP services outside the general education classroom less than 21 percent of the time (80 percent inclusion); partial inclusion as the provision of IEP services outside the general education classroom at least 21 percent of the time, but no more than 60 percent of the time; and sub-separate settings as the provision of IEP services outside the general education classroom for more than 60 percent of the time. Using the Department's model, IEP Teams are not meant to manipulate student time in or out of the general education classroom to trigger a specific placement setting. By contrast, BPS special education staff reported having to add minutes in general education settings to students' IEPs so that they totaled at least 240 minutes to trigger the inclusion placement code. The district's requirement that a student have 240-300 minutes in a general education classroom to access an "inclusion program" is overly constraining. This requirement, which staff reported is simply in place to meet bureaucratic needs, creates an inflexible, binary system that does not provide for partial inclusion of students. Students' IEPs are written to match the district's coding system, which does not include an option for partial inclusion, instead of being written to meet students' specific needs which currently results in low inclusion rates, particularly partial inclusion rates, for students with disabilities.

2. Interviewees reported inconsistent models of inclusion across schools, and stated that in some schools, an inclusion classroom is defined as a room where the teacher is dually certified. In others, it is defined as a classroom with two teachers in which a third of the students are students with disabilities.
3. Five schools in the district have made changes to their classroom models to improve inclusion and LRE; however, it appears that district leaders have not provided a clear plan or long-term commitment regarding these changes.

- a) This has resulted in inconsistent inclusion models across the four schools, some of which do not meet the definition of inclusion. For example, in one of the schools, the Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary School, two instructional groups have more than 50 percent students with disabilities.
4. The lack of a district-wide policy on inclusion contributes to adverse impacts on the inclusion of students with disabilities and LRE for students of color. In reviewing the 2021-2022 school year partial inclusion, full inclusion, and substantially separate program placement rates, Boston remains below state averages. Outcomes are particularly poor relative to state averages for partial inclusion placements and substantially separate placements.
- a) The full inclusion rate is 58 percent compared with the state rate of 66 percent.
  - b) The partial inclusion rate is 6.9 percent compared with the state rate of 13.3 percent.
  - c) The substantially separate rate is at 28.9 percent compared with the state rate of 13.6 percent. The substantially separate placement for students of color is 30 percent.

The low partial inclusion rate for BPS is indicative of the lack of partial inclusion opportunities in the district, which negatively impacts access for students with disabilities to a continuum of special education services. The lack of access is further exacerbated by the district's 240-300 minute definition of inclusion services as described above.

5. The district's lack of a policy on inclusion has also resulted in a highly flawed placement system that contributes to a lack of access to inclusion and LRE for students with disabilities and black and brown boys with emotional impairments in several ways.
- a) Placement decisions are not finalized by IEP teams and are instead made through a separate process at the central office, without full consideration of the students' individualized needs as discussed by the IEP team.
  - b) Students who are ready to move to less restrictive settings often need to change schools, which may not be close to their homes. Consequently, families sometimes choose to leave students in substantially separate placement to avoid the disruption that may come with changing schools.
  - c) Students with disabilities experience additional difficulties transferring from substantially separate settings to less restrictive environments because their re-assignment depends on the availability of "seats" in the school of choice. This results in interrupted or delayed services as students are required to "await placement" until the central office finds schools with available seats.

6. A record review and interviews indicated that the district's current funding model allocated funds for students with disabilities based on disability type, which may not sufficiently address diverse student needs. In addition, interviewees reported that despite written guidance about the use of special education related funds to support students in the least restrictive environment, the effect of students being funded by disability type results in students routinely being placed into disability-specific strands within certain schools.
  - a) Too often, the funding formula determines which special education services students receive without appropriate flexibility, particularly if they are assigned to one of the district's special education substantially separate strands.
  - b) Students' IEPs are written to match the structure of program strands, instead of being written to reflect students' actual needs and strengths. This limits student access to inclusion and has resulted in the disproportionate placement of black and brown students with emotional impairments in these substantially separate strands.
  - c) The district is considering changing the disability-based funding system to a needs-based funding system through the new "Reimagine School Funding" project which is at a beginning stage of development.
- C. The district's lack of a policy and procedural manual on special education, that is widely shared and easily accessible by administrators, educators, and parents, impedes the district from effectively providing services as indicated in the students' IEPs.
  1. Interviews indicated that the IEP process was not streamlined or implemented with consistency across the district, with some team decisions such as placement made at the central office. This can result in the development of IEPs that are based on system needs rather than individual student needs.
  2. Interviews indicated that due to staffing shortages, students with IEPs are not receiving all services outlined in their IEPs, including Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), and Speech and Language Therapy. The district reported making efforts to provide services by hiring more service providers, offering higher salaries, and contracting external service providers, but the district still has not been able to adequately provide services as outlined in the students' IEPs.
  3. The district reported having a streamlined system for parent notification when IEP services were not being provided, however it emerged from interviews that communication between the district and parents/guardians was not effective. Interviewees cited unanswered phone calls or emails, and a lack of clear direction about whom to communicate with regarding particular areas of concern. This results in delayed or inappropriate services to students with IEPs.



4. In addition to students with IEPs not receiving all services outlined in their IEPs, district staff reported that the lack of staffing has led to significant backlogs for initial and three-year re-evaluations for students with disabilities. This has led to delays of services for students with disabilities as indicated in their IEPs.
- D. The special education leadership structure has changed repeatedly over the past several years and agreed-upon plans for improving special education services are not in place. At the time of this review, it was unclear who is leading and accountable for the work focused on educating students in the least restrictive environment and rectifying inequitable patterns of placements for students of color.
1. The district does not have a universally accepted plan that it is working toward with a sense of urgency to increase opportunities for inclusion for all students with disabilities and to decrease the high placement rates of students of color in substantially separate settings.
  2. Interviews indicated that staff held competing ideas as to how to address educating students in the least restrictive environment and decreasing the high placement rates of students of color in substantially separate settings.
  3. Interviews with families indicated that without a policy on inclusion, there was no clear definition or understanding throughout the district. As a result, not all students are able to access learning in the least restrictive environment.

**Impact:** The district’s lack of urgency, planning, and policy development in special education continue to have profound consequences for the district’s students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are not served in the least restrictive environment, and students of color are being disproportionately placed in substantially separate settings. Moreover, not all students are receiving their required IEP services or services that should be provided based on timely IEP re-evaluations.

These challenges impede student access to high-quality education, prevent appropriate peer interactions with other students, and ultimately limit students’ preparedness for post-secondary career and educational options. Without immediate steps to develop an agreed-upon plan for prioritizing and remedying these challenges, for stable and effective departmental leadership, and for effective implementation of improved policies and services, frustration and mistrust among families and other key stakeholders will continue to increase, and students will miss out on critical opportunities to learn, develop, and thrive.

## **English Learners**

### *Strength Findings*

**1. The Office of English Learners has laid the groundwork for enhanced English learner supports and outcomes through effective stakeholder engagement, enhanced school-level communication, and investments in professional development, personnel, and infrastructure.**

- A. The district proactively engages practitioners and educational partners in focus groups to participate in strategic planning related to services for English learners.
1. Participants expressed appreciation for the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) as a vehicle for shared problem solving of district challenges. A focus group participant noted, “I have watched that the district has involved us more as parents and invited us to different meetings like this one where we can speak and continue making positive changes.”
  2. The district’s English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) was featured in the [ELPAC online training modules](#) for DESE’s Office of Language Acquisition due to its use of best practices in engaging and empowering parents of English learners.
  3. A draft Strategic Plan for Multilingual Learners (formerly referred to as the “Roadmap for Quality Education for Multilingual Learning”) has been developed with robust stakeholder engagement and presented to the BPS English Learner Task Force in draft form.
    - a) Submitted documents reference 18 Roadmap-specific community engagement sessions in the 2020-2021 school year, input from panelists and consultants with expertise in 7 different languages, and feedback from experts in the field of Immigration, Globalization and Language Acquisition.
    - b) District staff involved in the development of the document also referenced input from district engagement with more than 2,000 community members, 98 different stakeholder meetings, including town halls and smaller meetings with faith-based leaders, nonprofits, and partner organizations.
- B. The district has enhanced school-level communication pathways and made investments in professional development, personnel, and infrastructure that support its plans to monitor service delivery within the EL program.
1. The district has ensured every school is staffed with a Language Acquisition team Facilitator (LATF) whose role is to support school-level compliance with important policies and procedures.
    - a) Every school has an LATF, who supports school leaders in ensuring adherence to state and federal policies, procedures, and regulations. For example, LATFs focus on areas such as licensure, student coding, provision of ELE instructional time and services, family

engagement, and translation/interpretation. LATFs are in some cases administrators and in other cases full-time classroom teachers.

- b) The district submitted documentation of monthly meetings in 2021 between the Office of English Learners and the LATF staff. Agendas and meeting documents provide updates on state and federal expectations and deadlines, updates on next steps related to the terms of the DOJ Settlement agreement, as well as technical assistance on topics such as how to enter service delivery minutes in the district's student information system.
- c) Through coordination between OEL and LATFs, the district has maintained compliance with ACCESS participation and educator licensure/endorsement in several important functions:
  - i. Sheltered English Endorsement. Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) is an approach to teaching academic content in English to English learners. Districts must ensure that core academic teachers and vocational teachers who teach English learners, and those administrators who supervise and evaluate core academic teachers who teach English learners, obtain an SEI teacher or SEI administrator endorsement as part of their licensure.
    - a. As of the October 2021 Education Personnel Information Management System (EPIMS) reporting to DESE, 92 percent of the core teachers serving ELs (3,112 teachers) were SEI endorsed.
    - b. As of the October 2021 EPIMS reporting to DESE, 98 percent of principals with ELs assigned (134 principals) were reported as SEI endorsed.
  - ii. In addition, from 2017-2020 the district maintained an ACCESS for ELs average participation rate of 96.7 percent.
- 2. In compliance with 603 CMR 44.06(1)(a), the district has a comprehensive professional development plan, coordinating and facilitating various professional development opportunities (in person, online, hybrid, after hours, etc.) for educators to meet individual context and needs.
- 3. The district has allocated \$10 million of ESSER funds to multilingual infrastructure to support the hiring of ESL and bilingual personnel, translation practices, instructional materials, and educator preparation and endorsement.
  - a) The district has hired or is in the process of hiring multilingual instructional coaches to support instruction in schools, particularly in bilingual programs, including a bilingual

assessment coordinator, a compliance platform manager, and a data analyst to better monitor student progress and achievement data.

4. In fall 2021, initial school-level and district-level EL data dashboards were developed by cross-teams of district personnel, including school superintendents, the Deputy Superintendent for Academics, the Office of English Learners, the Office of Data and Accountability, the Office of Human Capital, the Office of Instructional and Information Technology, school leaders, and LATFs. At the time of this review, a comprehensive EL-centered data platform was currently under development to further improve ease of access and data visualization quality.

**Impact:** The district’s investments in stakeholder engagement will help ensure that the needs of students and families are centered in its continuous improvement cycles. The district’s investment in professional development, personnel and infrastructure that monitor EL services have led to improvements in compliance that enable more students to have access to required services, consistent with their civil rights. These investments will be foundational for future work to judge the effectiveness of instructional services and programs.

#### *Challenges and Areas for Growth*

**1. The district is not ensuring that all English learners receive appropriate ESL instruction. The district lacks a comprehensive ESL curriculum and clear instructional expectations, and systems are not yet in place to effectively support and comprehensively monitor the quality of EL instruction at the school level.**

- A. The district is not providing appropriate ESL instruction to English learners in the district, as is required by law.
  1. Districts must include ESL instruction in the implementation of their English learner education (ELE) program(s) to advance English language development and promote academic achievement of ELs.
  2. However, district staff shared that that only 87 percent of English learners with disabilities received ESL instruction from ESL licensed teachers. Staff noted that the district was working to identify the causes and systems leading to this issue.
  3. The district’s report submitted to the DOJ in March 2022 states that 280 BPS students (2 percent of English learners in BPS) are not receiving ESL instruction from an ESL licensed teacher.

- B. The district does not have an ESL curriculum and lacks clear expectations and systems to monitor the delivery of ESL instruction for English language development which is necessary to support ELs' emerging English language and literacy skills.
1. Sheltered content instruction and content accessibility alone do not provide the focused language and literacy instructional support that ELs need to meet the linguistic complexity of DESE's [Curriculum Frameworks](#). This is especially true of ELs at foundational levels, whose language needs are different from those of proficient English speakers.
  2. [Guidance](#) provided by DESE states that ESL instruction should follow ESL unit plans or ESL curricula, and that lesson plans must integrate the WIDA standards. ESL instruction should be delivered during time designated for English language development and should offer systematic, explicit, and sustained language instruction in the context of the Frameworks.
  3. A 2021-2022 Superintendent's Circular references "Instructional Services for Language Learners" and outlines the district's expectations for service delivery during the 2021-2022 school year. The document states that the "Office of English Learners supports schools using their ELA curriculum as the starting point for ESL instruction and developing units to complement the Tier 1 ELA instruction."
  4. However, educators in focus groups were not able to reference clear expectations for providing ESL instruction, including expectations and resources to support English Language Development.
    - a) Educators participating in focus groups reported that they did not have an ESL curriculum.
    - b) Some ESL teachers reported that their job was to teach ELA content, and to make it accessible for English learners by supplementing and supporting the ELA curriculum.
    - c) Other interviewees mentioned that the expectation in the district was to teach grade-level content during instructional time designated for instruction in English Language Development.
  5. The district does not have a system in place to monitor whether English learners are receiving required ESL instruction in certain educational settings, such as when ESL instruction is embedded in core content instruction or delivered via co-teaching or push-in models.
    - a) District leaders acknowledged that in settings where ESL was embedded in core instruction, delivered in push-in setting, or delivered by teachers who are licensed in

both the content area in which they teach and ESL, there was no system in place for the district to monitor whether students received ESL instruction.

- b) Although the district monitors minutes of instruction, without a system for classroom observations, it cannot ensure that services are being delivered in these settings.
- C. Systems are not in place to effectively support schools in necessary, focused improvements to ESL instructional quality.
- 1. The district is able to monitor the *quantity* of ESL instructional time but is not monitoring or supporting the *quality* of instruction to support the academic and linguistic progress of English learners.
    - a) School and district staff who were interviewed reported that the district is not reinforcing policies and procedures related to the quality of SEI and ESL instruction.
  - 2. The district currently lacks personnel to support schools in strengthening instruction, facilitating coaching and mentoring, and building the capacity of classroom educators to use professional development in lesson planning and delivery.
    - a) Every school has a Language Assessment Team Facilitator (LATF), who focuses on adherence to state and federal policies, procedures, and regulations. These positions serve important compliance functions and are in some cases administrators and in other cases full-time classroom teachers.
    - b) Interviewees reported that within their compliance role, LATFs are not expected – and often do not have time in their schedules – to act as teacher leaders or instructional coaches in their assigned schools.
    - c) Interviewees were not able to identify other personnel who were providing the necessary level of observation and feedback on the effectiveness of ESL and SEI instruction required for quality program monitoring. However, it was noted that the district planned to fill a dozen instructional coach roles to support this need.
    - d) The district has well-established professional development offerings for ESL educators; however, the lack of instructional coaching capacity prevents the district from ensuring that PD is improving the quality of instruction and consequently student outcomes.
  - 3. At the central office, district staff did not clearly articulate the role of OEL in supporting schools with high needs and larger populations of English learners, including Transformation Schools, noting that this responsibility instead lay with the Office of Transformation or with school superintendents.

- D. The role of the ESL teacher is not clearly defined in the district, and the district does not have systems at the school level to promote shared responsibility for the academic and linguistic success of English learners.
1. Within focus groups, educators did not report a consistent, clear understanding of the role of an ESL teacher.
    - a) Some educators stated that the ESL teacher role was limited to sheltering the content instruction for English learners and supporting the content curriculum even if core academic teachers were SEI endorsed.
    - b) This view overlooks the importance of English Language Development instruction and fails to note that if core teachers are SEI endorsed, they themselves are equipped to make the content they teach accessible for their students who are English learners.
  2. Focus group participants reported that general education, bilingual education, ESL, and, where appropriate, special education teachers did not consistently have regular, collaborative planning time to review student data, analyze student work, and design instruction, including appropriate scaffolds.
  3. Although the Office of English Learners and the Office of Special Education hold a joint annual training for LATFs and COSE to plan for ELs with disabilities at their school, district and school staff said that ESL teachers and special education teachers did not consistently have time allocated in their regular schedules to plan together for the success of English learners with disabilities.
- E. The district does not have procedures in place to monitor the progress that English learners make linguistically and academically, as required by law.
1. The district has set expectations that schools establish personalized goals for English learners who have not met their English language proficiency benchmarks; however the district has not implemented systems to ensure that this practice takes place, as required by MGL Chapter 71A §11.
    - a) The 2021-2022 Superintendent’s Circular establishing “Instructional Services for English Learners” sets appropriate expectations for school leadership teams, including that they “(i) identify areas in which identified English learners needs improvement and establish personalized goals for the identified English learners to attain English proficiency; (ii) assess and track the progress of English learners in the identified areas of improvement; (iii) review resources and services available to identified English learners that may assist

said learners in the identified areas of improvement; and (iv) incorporate input from the parents or legal guardian of the identified English learner.

- b) District leaders reported that the implementation of the English language proficiency benchmark expectations was not monitored by the district. District leaders stated that they were exploring different platforms to better support schools in this area.
  - c) During the interviews with teachers and Language Assessment Team Facilitators (LATFs), some interviewees expressed that they found these expectations challenging to understand and were unclear about how to determine whether a student was meeting benchmarks.
2. The district does not have comprehensive procedures to identify whether students transferring into the district were former English learners (FELs). This poses a challenge for routine monitoring of FEL student progress, which is required by law.
- a) The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires school districts to design and implement a process for routinely monitoring FEL students' academic progress for four years following their reclassification. Systems to identify FEL students, including those who transfer into the district, is a prerequisite for effective monitoring systems.
  - b) The district is able to identify students as FELs if the students enroll with a complete set of school records, including their ACCESS scores. Unless the students' previous school is responsive to record requests, the district does not identify former English learners.

**Impact:** English learners in the district are not consistently receiving sheltered support for Tier 1 content instruction as well as systematic, explicit, and sustained ESL instruction. Without a rigorous ESL curriculum, clear expectations for ESL instruction, and instructional coaching and collaboration for ESL educators, the quality of ESL instruction in the district and the linguistic and academic achievement of students will continue to suffer.

Students who cannot meet their English proficiency benchmarks or grade level academic expectations due to the poor quality of ELE services do not have equitable access to meaningful learning opportunities necessary to thrive in high school and to graduate with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to be successful in college, career, and civic life.

## **Other Student Supports**

### *Challenges and Areas for Growth*



**1. The district’s school choice and assignment system does not provide equal access to high-quality schools for all students. Although the district has made changes to the exam school admissions policy, the impact of these changes remains unclear. Moreover, these changes did not address longstanding structural challenges with the open enrollment schools in BPS.**

A. The improvements made by the district to address the exam high school admissions process, change policies, and increase funding have not fundamentally altered the school choice and assignment system. The issues that were reported on in 2020 about systemic barriers to equity continue to exist at the time of this review.

1. The 2020 District Review Report stated that, “The district’s school choice and assignment system, which seeks to provide more options for families close to their home, does not provide equal access to high-quality schools for all students and contributes to the problem of racial segregation in schools.”
2. With the exception of the changes to the exam school admissions policy, the school committee has not modified its existing policies on school assignment. The “Home-Based Model of School Choice” was adopted in 2013 and has not been changed since that time.
3. The disparity in student outcomes between the open enrollment schools and exam, lottery, and application-based schools remains significant. For example, the chart below shows the disparity in 2021 MCAS scores for exam high schools and non-exam high schools.

**Table 10: Disparity in Student Outcomes in Different High School Models**

<b>Grouping</b>	<b>2021 Grade 10 ELA % Meeting or Exceeding Expectations</b>	<b>2021 Grade 10 Math % Meeting or Exceeding Expectations</b>
All BPS High Schools	44.9%	37.8%
BPS Exam Schools	90.1%	89.8%
BPS non-Exam Schools	24.2%	13.2%

B. The 2020 District Review Report noted the racial disparities in school enrollment that resulted from the current school choice and assignment model, as evidenced by 2019 data. A review of 2022 data indicated that these disparities have held steady or worsened.

1. “District data indicated that in 2019 while districtwide enrollment for White students was 15%, 5 elementary schools enrolled over 50% White students: Eliot at 61%, Perry at 59%, Lyndon at 56%, Kilmer at 52%, and Warren-Prescott at 52%. In 2019, while districtwide enrollment of African American/Black students was 31%, the enrollment of African American/Black students in the Eliot, Perry, and Lyndon, Kilmer, and Warren-Prescott schools was 5%, 23%, 9%, 16%, and 12%, respectively.”

2. District data indicated that in 2022 while districtwide enrollment for White students was 15 percent, 4 elementary schools enrolled over 50 percent White students: Eliot at 62 percent, Perry at 60 percent, Lyndon at 57 percent, and Warren-Prescott at 59 percent. In 2022, while districtwide enrollment of African American/Black students was 29 percent, the enrollment of African American/Black students in the Eliot, Perry, and Lyndon, and Warren-Prescott schools was 5 percent, 13 percent, 9 percent, and 13 percent, respectively.
  3. Interviewees said that the School Quality Task Force had been meeting prior to the pandemic to address these disparities associated with the current school choice and assignment model, but that those meetings were disbanded and have not restarted. No one interviewed for this report, most notably school committee members and district leaders, described any plans for addressing inequities in the school choice and assignment system, beyond the changes to the exam school admissions process.
- C. As similarly reported in the 2020 District Review Report, interviewees noted, and a review of documents and data confirmed, that inequities exist in the placement of special education program strands.
1. Open enrollment high schools house a disproportionate number of special education strands. The 2020 report stated, “A document review indicated that open-enrollment high schools had between three and five special education program strands while schools that required special applications had fewer. For instance, the Horace Mann charter schools did not have any program strands, and pilot schools and exam schools each had one program strand only.”
  2. The same pattern holds true in 2022. Of the 31 high schools in Boston, the 9 lowest performing schools, all of which are open enrollment schools, house 45 percent of the district’s special education strands.
  3. When asked how decisions related to special education strand placements were made, most interviewees, including the principals of open enrollment schools who disproportionately receive these programs, were unable to provide an answer.
    - a) Interviewees including principals, teachers, and district special education leaders stated that they did not have input on the location of special education strands.
    - b) Overall, interviewees said that the location of the special education strands was seen as largely a decision based upon which schools had space, and not on the impact of such decisions on students.

4. District and school leaders stated that the high concentration of special education strands in open enrollment schools created a disproportionate level of challenge for those schools and negatively affected the ability of schools to serve all students effectively.

D. The current school choice and assignment system also creates safety concerns. Interviewees stated that the only seats available for “safety transfers” were to open enrollment schools, which limits the availability of appropriate options for such transfers.

1. Because the district fills almost every seat available at exam, lottery and special application schools, the only schools that have availability for safety transfers are open enrollment schools.

2. Principals reported serious safety concerns about the ways in which students were moved to open enrollment schools as part of this process, sometimes resulting in students who were meant to be kept separate from each other being assigned to the same school.

**Impact:** The school choice and assignment system remains a core, systemic barrier to increasing equitable access to high-quality educational environments within the district.

As described in the 2020 District Review Report, open enrollment schools “are often tasked with providing support for a disproportionately large number of high needs students,” with the result that “a small number of schools are left to address bigger challenges in meeting overall student achievement goals.” The report further notes that, “These factors combine to reduce opportunities for the many district students enrolled in non-exam schools.”

These issues noted in 2020 remain with no plans underway to improve them at this time. Until district leadership and the school committee advance a more equitable school choice and assignment system, the district will have limited success in improving outcomes and opportunities for historically marginalized students.

**2. The district’s system for managing, responding to, and resolving complaints is not responsive to parent and guardian concerns; does not support the physical, social, and emotional well-being of all students; and does not ensure a safe environment for all students.**

A. While administrators, staff, and families reported that systems were in place to support students and maintain safety at school, many families reported concerns about the lack of understanding, response, and staff training in the district around bullying.

1. Between October 2021 and the review, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (DESE) Problem Resolution System (PRS) Office received 12 complaints related to bullying of students in Boston Public Schools.

2. For six complaints, the district did not respond to the complaint (by submitting the “Local Report”) by the due date. The district was granted an extension by DESE. However, the district did not submit the Local Report by the extended due date.
  3. Two complaints were closed by PRS due to a lack of PRS jurisdiction.
  4. Multiple complaints received involved the same school.
- B. The district’s inadequate response times for bullying complaints are emblematic of the district’s delayed response times to PRS complaints more generally. Specifically, of the 45 complaints PRS received between July 2021 and the review:
1. PRS issued a Request for Local Report to the district for 24 complaints.
  2. The district submitted 19 Local Reports past the due date.
  3. PRS granted 11 deadline extensions for submission of Local Reports at the request of the district. Eight reports were overdue at the time the extension was requested, and four were subsequently received after the extended due date had expired.
- C. The district lacks sufficient staff capacity to respond to complaints in a timely and effective manner.
1. At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, one district staff member managed all complaints from PRS, in addition to serving in several other functions.
  2. In order to respond to the delays, outside legal counsel has been assisting the district with complaints received from PRS.
- D. District staff reported that internal structures for accepting and responding to complaints were reactive, rather than proactive.
1. The district has developed a dashboard by which staff and administrators are able to monitor progress on a complaint, from receipt to conclusion.
  2. However, the district does not analyze complaint trends to build sustainable practices based on these trends. If multiple complaints received are related to a specific school, the information is not reviewed to develop school-level improvements to support the safety and wellbeing of students.

**Impact:** Some parents do not believe that district schools prioritize the physical, social, and emotional well-being and safety of all students. Without a strong system in place for responding to complaints,

families feel ignored when concerns arise. When a district does not take steps to respond to parent concerns, cultivate relationships, and build a strong sense of belonging, trust is diminished and student wellbeing is potentially at risk. Working with families to resolve concerns will lead to a more supportive and effective learning environment for students.

## Recommendations

### Inclusion and Special Education Services

- Urgently develop and implement a district-wide inclusion strategic plan with input from stakeholders, that directly addresses disproportionate placement, defines a clear system for data collection and reporting, and includes short-term objectives for inclusion. Given the number of changes in special education leadership, it is recommended that the district hire a consultancy firm or hire a highly effective special education leadership team whose members have a proven track record of success working in urban school districts who will work with a sense of urgency on restructuring special education services and programming so that inclusion is at the foundation of special education in every school. The consultancy firm will hold the district accountable and ensure the critical work moves forward.
- Develop and implement a district-wide policy on inclusion that incorporates a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and specific models for high-quality inclusive education in all schools. Maintain a system for organizing substantially separate classrooms that is separate from inclusion. Shift away from the use of special education program codes, which is an inflexible system that does not provide for a continuum of services in the least restrictive environment. Authorize IEP teams to complete the IEP placement process, instead of placement assignments being made by the central office.
- Develop a policy and procedural manual on special education that clearly defines the development and implementation of the IEP, including the provision of services for students with IEPs. The manual should clearly explain the IEP team process including determining eligibility, writing the IEP, making placement decisions, and communicating with parents regarding service delivery to students with disabilities.

### English Learners

- Leverage strategic planning and curriculum efforts to develop structures to support implementation of ESL services at the school level. Clarify and communicate recommendations for a rigorous ESL curriculum and high-quality service delivery, and differentiate it from sheltered content instruction. Prioritize collaborative planning time for general education, bilingual education, ESL, and where appropriate, special education, and leverage the investment in instructional coaches and other existing systems for professional learning to support school leaders in scheduling and facilitating this time. Monitor English learners' achievement in the content areas and progress in acquiring English and develop systems to review the quality of service delivery at the school level.
- DESE's analysis of documentation from the district indicates that BPS may maintain some students' enrollment in Language-Specific SEI programs in self-contained classrooms longer than

necessary; this could not be verified without a school-specific review of student levels and schedules. The district should investigate whether Language-Specific SEI programs are operated in the least segregative manner consistent with achieving the programs' educational goals and, if necessary, immediately correct practices that maintain English learner students in self-contained classes longer than necessary.

### **Other Student Supports**

- Re-engage the Quality School Task Force to reexamine the school choice and assignment system to address current inequalities. This process should rely on the use of the district's Racial Equity Planning Tool so that there is a deliberate effort to engage external stakeholders in this process, particularly families. The school committee and district leadership should set clear targets and deliverables for the task force so that it can ultimately revise the current policy and make any other structural changes necessary to address inequalities in the school choice system as soon as possible.
- Revise the district's system for responding to complaints by building capacity within the district to manage complaints in a timely manner, and using this dashboard to track trends and recurring issues at the school level to ensure that schools are proactive in correcting non-compliance systemically.
- Expand anti-bullying professional development, with a strong focus on schools in which complaint trends indicate a systemic concern.

### **Resources**

- [The WIDA English Language Development \(ELD\) Standards Framework](#) provides a foundation for curriculum, instruction and assessment for multilingual learners in kindergarten through grade 12. The ELD Standards Framework is centered on equity and fosters the assets, contributions and potential of multilingual learners. Centered around 4 Big Ideas, the framework supports the design of standards-based educational experiences that are student-centered, culturally and linguistically sustaining, and responsive to multilingual learners' strengths and needs.
- [Collaboration Tool](#) and [Interactive Guide to the Collaboration Tool](#) is a multi-layered, multi-purpose tool designed to help curriculum writers operationalize WIDA Standards in conjunction with the Frameworks. It highlights the need for collaboration between language and content educators and helps teachers prioritize and strategically plan around Key Uses of Academic Language in the context of key academic practices (Cheuk, 2013) common across content area Frameworks. The Collaboration Tool can help educators prepare to create clear, standards-based language learning goals for developing curricula using the ESL unit template.

- [ESL MCU Unit](#) and [Lesson Plan](#) templates are documents outlining key considerations for developing collaborative next generation ESL units following the Project’s curricular design approach. Annotated versions of the unit and lesson templates provide critical-thinking prompts as additional support for educators developing ESL curricula at the unit and lesson levels.
- [ESL MCUs. 12 units spanning grades K–12](#) focus on systematic, explicit, and sustained language development within the context of the Frameworks. Each ESL MCU connects to key linguistic demands from an existing core academic MCU (in the English language arts [ELA], math, social studies, or science content area), but the primary purpose of these ESL units is focused and dedicated language study.
- [The Massachusetts Blueprint for English Learner Success](#) provides guidance, resources, and support to districts, schools, and teachers, and should not be interpreted to impose additional legal requirements beyond those contained in the applicable laws and regulations.



# Human Resources and Professional Development

## Contextual Background

At the time of this review, the Boston Public Schools Office of Human Capital (OHC) housed the following units: employee services, employee information services, HR Data and Analytics, Labor Relations, Payroll, Performance Management, and Strategic Staffing. A review of the current Key Staff Roster in place at the time of the review indicated that OHC is led by the Chief of Human Capital and it is composed of 59 positions.

The Office of Recruitment, Cultivation, and Diversity Programs (RCD) sits within the Division of Equity and Strategy (E&S). This office leads and is responsible for the district's recruitment and retention efforts, including the district's educator diversification priority. RCD, led by the managing director of recruitment, cultivation, and diversity programs is composed of 11 positions.

## Recruitment and Hiring Systems

Interviews and a document review confirmed that RCD continued to develop and implement robust teacher pipeline programs to support educator diversification recruitment and hiring efforts. Interviewees noted that RCD and a two-person team, which were responsible for all recruiting efforts, shifted somewhat from traditional recruitment activities, such as job fairs and out-of-state efforts, to an increased emphasis on community focused recruitment efforts for both professional and non-professional positions in response to challenges posed by the ongoing health pandemic. In addition to developing and implementing recruitment activities focused on external applicant pools, interviewees confirmed that the district also implemented comprehensive recruitment strategies for non-renewed provisional licensed teachers of color, excessed staff, and experienced educators from schools identified for closure. Interviewees confirmed that beginning in the 2021-2022 school year the district required all schools to set diversity hiring goals and school leaders were provided with access to a data dashboard which reflected the hiring data for the last 5 years. Interviewees confirmed that school leaders were required to review teacher and student demographic data to develop the diversity hiring goal.

Since 2019, BPS has received approximately \$1,758,686 in competitive grant funding to support its educator diversification efforts. Multiple interviewees noted that the district's financial and human capital investments have lagged in comparison with the competitive grant funding investments.

## Supervision, Evaluation, and Educator Development and Professional Development

In the 2020-2021 school year, the district placed its first significant financial investment in its Equitable Literacy initiative, allocating \$100 million over the course of three years to support its cohort of Transformation Schools, including the hiring of and training of instructional coaches to support implementation through high-quality instructional materials. In the 2022-2023 school year, all schools will be required to have an instructional focus on Equitable Literacy and use 15 contractual school-based

PD hours to support its implementation. To prepare for this investment, during the 2021-2022 school year, the district trained all school leaders and one-third of its teachers on the components of Equitable Literacy.

Despite these investments, access to high-quality PD still varies widely and school-based PD is not monitored to ensure alignment to school or district priorities or student learning needs. Similarly, while the district has made strides in calibrating educator evaluator training, the evaluation system continues to be implemented ineffectively.

Finally, while the district and the Boston Teachers Union (BTU) have collaborated on several initiatives, some collective bargaining agreement (CBA) provisions remain barriers to achieving district goals and priorities. In 2021, the BTU CBA for educators expired. During the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, the district and BTU negotiated temporary safety agreements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a result, CBA negotiations for a successor contract were delayed. Despite negotiation sessions occurring bi-weekly throughout the 2021-2022 school year, bargaining members remain without a settled CBA.

## Strength Findings

**1. BPS has continued to develop and implement strong pipeline, recruitment, and retention programs to increase the diversity of the educator and school leader workforce and has set expectations for hiring goals in this area across the district. This was identified as a priority initiative in the BPS-DESE MOU.**

A. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district's Office of Recruitment, Cultivation, and Diversity Programs (RCD) has developed and implemented several robust pipeline, recruitment, and retention programs and strategies intended to increase the number of educators of color in BPS.

1. BPS Teacher Cadet Program: The teacher cadet program is an educator pipeline program for middle, high school, and college students. Students participate in an advisory system that follows them from high-school graduation, higher education, and career development to support their return to BPS as highly qualified teachers.

a) During the 2020-2021 school year, RCD expanded the program into a comprehensive career pathway program for any BPS student beginning in grade seven through college completion.

b) In the 2021-2022 school year, 15 middle and 46 high-school students, as well as 14 college students, were enrolled in the teacher cadet program.

2. BPS Bilingual Education/Accelerated Community to Teacher (BE/ACTT) for Pre-Service Candidates: BE/ACTT is an accelerated preparation program for Boston residents to obtain preliminary licensure in select content areas, including early childhood, elementary, mathematics, science, English language arts, and history. The accelerated program is 12 months in duration and is designed to prepare racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse Boston residents, career-changers, or BPS paraprofessionals and substitutes to become novice BPS teachers with a provisional license.

a) Data submitted from the district notes that 14 program participants received provisional license status in the 2021-2022 school year with most program candidates (97 percent) identified as people of color.

3. Retention Programs and Services for Educators of Color: A review of an RCD presentation from March 12, 2022 indicates that the district has developed several retention programs, including:

- School leaders and administrators of color affinity groups

- Women and Male Educators of Color executive coaching leadership programs (WEOC and MEOC)
- African American, Latinx, Asian, Native-American network (ALANA); and
- The Keith Love Peer Mentoring program

Interviews and a document review confirmed that over the past five years, the WEOC and MEOC leadership programs have supported 97 and 87 participants respectively. Interviewees indicated that 200 educators have participated in the Keith Love Peer Mentoring program.

4. BPS Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) supports: The district has systems in place to provide provisional and emergency licensed educators with MTEL support.
  - a) District-developed MTEL preparation programs are taught by district staff and include courses for all core subject areas. Interviewees noted that the model for curriculum and instruction MTEL preparation included a seminar, which incorporates a read and think aloud model, and a practice test with scoring, followed by a one-to-one debrief session.
  - b) Interviewees noted newly developed MTEL-flex courses that serve as an additional resource for educators.
  - c) Provisionally licensed educators receive priority access to the district's MTEL support programs and engage in school-based professional development.
5. Novice Teacher Mentoring: BPS implements a mentoring program that supports novice teachers during their first year and beyond, including mentoring for educators of color by educators of color.
  - a) The district's Office of Teacher Leadership develops and implements the new teacher development program which provides mentor induction for first-year teachers, including all provisional and emergency licensed educators. Interviewees noted that mentors were school based and received ongoing training.
  - b) As of the 2021-2022 school year, second- and third-year teachers also have access to the mentorship program which includes both in-person and online components.
  - c) Interviewees noted that the district implemented an additional mentoring program, the Keith Love Peer Mentoring program, for teachers of color operated by fellow teachers of color. Interviewees said that the focus on educators of color-led mentorship aimed to provide leadership opportunities and pathways for educators.

- B. BPS has developed district-wide systems to ensure that school-based leaders consider the racial, ethnic, and linguistic demographics of students and teachers when developing diversity hiring goals.
  - 1. Multiple interviews confirmed that in the 2021-2022 school year, for the first time, executive leadership evaluations, including those of the superintendent, school superintendents, and chiefs, included specific hiring goals related to educator diversification.
  - 2. Interviews and a document review confirmed that the district has developed a data dashboard to support school-based leaders with the development of annual diversity hiring goals.
    - a) The dashboard includes the five most recent years of hiring data and is provided to school leaders in advance of the next hiring cycle.
    - b) The dashboard makes clear the gaps between the racial and linguistic populations of students and their educators.
  - 3. Procedures are in place to ensure that when school leaders hire a new employee, they consider candidates of color. When school leaders decide to hire an employee who would not increase the racial or linguistic diversity of the school, they are required to explain in writing why the candidate is the best candidate for the job as well as actions they took to recruit candidates of color.

**Impact:** The district continues to prioritize the diversification of its educator and school leader corps, and has developed and implemented numerous programs, supports, and systems that are working cohesively toward this goal. All students benefit from opportunities to learn from educators of diverse backgrounds and educators teaching in racially diverse cohorts and teams are likely to develop the skills and collective capacities that Boston has prioritized in its work to advance culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.

**2. The district has created a robust menu of professional development offerings and has coordinated the development of specific PD content aligned to the district’s Equitable Literacy focus.**

- A. The district has created robust district-wide professional development opportunities, and a central platform to house all PD opportunities in one place.
  - 1. Interviewees said that the district has made significant investments in ensuring evidence-based, high-quality professional learning opportunities.

- a) Interviewees reported a shift away from “one-off” workshops or “sit-and-get” PD content, to more competency-based, credit-bearing courses or modules that are 10-12 hours in length, job-embedded, and aligned to district priorities. Participants who successfully demonstrate competency in these courses can earn Academic Ladder Credits (ALCs) that can be used for salary lane changes.
  - b) Interviewees said that the district has increased the module-based offerings available to teachers from one module in the 2020-2021 school year to 22 modules available in the 2021-2022 school year.
- 2. Several interviewees and focus group participants told the review team that the development of the Telescope Initiative, while still limited in scope, has been well received. Run by the district in partnership with the Boston Teachers Union (BTU), the Telescope Initiative brings teachers together to observe one another and address common challenges together.
  - a) High-school teachers spoke positively about the initiative, including one interviewee who described it as “the best PD I’ve ever been to.”
  - b) The district has invested in Telescope by moving it off grant-funding and into the district budget, with plans to expand it across departments and develop more innovative professional learning models for teachers.
- 3. In the 2019-2020 school year, the district transitioned all its professional development content from MyLearningPlan to Vector, a central platform.
  - a) This system enables the district to better manage attendance, to assign credit throughout the system, and to solicit feedback on all professional learning content from educators so that they can review and monitor quality. The centralized platform also enhances the ease of access to professional development opportunities for educators and staff.
  - b) Since 2020, the district has provided 852 professional learning “events” through Vector and recorded 17,996 educators enrolled in these courses.
- B. The district has coordinated the development of professional development content in support of its Equitable Literacy focus and deployed central office resources in an intentional way to support this initiative.
  - 1. The district’s PD plan for the 2021-2022 school year supports district-wide knowledge-building of equitable literacy through coordinated PD for central office, school superintendents, and all school level leaders.

- a) A review of the district's PD Follow-Up Plans demonstrated an articulated Theory of Action connecting district systems to advancing equitable literacy.
  - b) Interviews and a document review confirmed professional development supports include:
    - District learning school visits for central office leaders to connect with school leaders and identify what is working well and what needs to be improved
    - Differentiated PD opportunities for school leaders
    - A robust selection of online modules and courses available in Vector (developed and vetted by a cross-function PD team); and
    - Professional learning aligned with core curricula.
2. The district's professional learning goal for the 2021-2022 school year is to ensure that all school leaders will be able to describe the five components of equitable literacy instruction, so that they can identify their own instructional focus for their Quality School Plans (QSPs) by June 2022.
- a) District leaders stated that the district has already met its stated goal for the 2021-2022 school year: to train all school leaders on the components of equitable literacy in 2021-2022, and to provide professional development on equitable literacy to one-third of its teachers.
3. In the submitted District Priorities Document, the district has further articulated its PD plan for the 2022-2023 school year to school leaders to support QSP implementation, support the 15-hour equitable literacy PD requirement for all educators, and meet its goal of training all educators in the 5 components of equitable literacy. To incentivize educators to enroll in district-developed equitable literacy courses, each course was designed using the ALC course model.

**Impact:** By providing a rich array of professional development opportunities in a central, accessible format, the district is better poised to ensure meaningful, impactful professional learning opportunities that meet the varying and diverse needs of its students. In addition to the impact on students, effective PD supports educators' career growth and development, which in turn supports their long-term retention in the district. Aligning professional development system-wide with Equitable Literacy has helped to lay a strong foundation for implementation of its instructional focus over the next several years.

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

**1. While the district has taken steps to increase the consistency of the educator evaluation process, the district’s use of the evaluation system does not accomplish the essential goals of providing high-quality feedback to educators and identifying ineffective teachers. The BPS educator evaluation system is also not fully aligned to state regulatory requirements.**

A. The district has made progress in increasing the consistency of the educator evaluation process across the district by developing evaluation training modules and providing coaching supports.

1. Interviews and a document review indicated that beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, all new evaluators were required to complete the Evaluator 101 online module. The training has a particular focus on anti-bias in evaluation. Requiring all new evaluators to attend a standardized training creates consistency in compliance and anti-bias expectations for new evaluators across the district.

2. Interviews and a review of the Calibration Training documentation indicated that the district has created and implemented a tiered-support coaching model for evaluators through the Performance Management Team.

a) In this model, six school-based professional liaisons serve as executive coaches to school leaders. Supports range from online self-service support to residency-style intensive coaching and calibration training support over the course of a school year.

B. The district does not use the educator evaluation system to consistently identify ineffective teachers.

1. The team reviewed evaluation ratings data for all educators in the 2020-2021 school year as well as for several years prior. In the 2019-2020 school year, most districts (86 percent) statewide evaluated their teachers and administrators. In BPS, per an agreement with the BTU, no teachers were evaluated, and only half of administrators were evaluated. In the 2020-2021 school year, 98.3 percent of BPS educators were rated “proficient” or “exemplary,” and 1.5 percent of educators were rated “needs improvement.”



**Table 11: Boston Public Schools Educator Evaluation Results 2020-2021**

2020-2021	# of Educators to be Evaluated	# Evaluated	% Evaluated	% E	% P	% NI	% U
All Educators	5,269	4,573	86.8	16.2	82.1	1.5	0.2
Administrators	298	215	72.1	27.9	70.7	0.9	0.5
Teachers	4,538	4,025	88.7	14.4	83.8	1.6	0.2
Teachers – NPTS	1,230	1,094	88.9	7.2	90.5	2.1	0.2
Teachers – PTS	3,061	2,684	87.7	18.2	80.3	1.3	0.3
Central Office	60	50	83.3%	34.0	66.0	0.0	0.0

- a) While these performance ratings are comparable to state averages, when compared to ten Massachusetts districts of similar size, demographics, and accountability profiles over the past three years, BPS has consistently rated educators “exemplary” at greater percentages across all roles, and “needs improvement” or “unsatisfactory” at lower percentages across all roles.
  
2. Multiple interviewees suggested that deleterious practices disincentivized evaluators to rate ineffective or developing educators as “needs improvement.”
  - a) Interviewees stated that when a school leader or evaluator rated a struggling or ineffective professional teaching status (PTS) teacher as “needs improvement,” it often led to a lengthy and burdensome grievance process based on the collective bargaining agreement.
  - b) Several interviewees and focus groups noted that some educators, after receiving a negative performance evaluation (or in many cases, leading up to a potential negative performance evaluation), took an extended medical leave for the remainder of the school year to restart their evaluation cycle the following fall. One interviewee said that this practice was “a frequent complaint of educators.”
  
3. While the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program was created to distribute evaluator responsibilities and provide support to teachers who receive “needs improvement” ratings, interviewees stated that the way that the system has been implemented disincentivizes peer evaluators from rating an educator as less than “proficient.” The BTU collective bargaining agreement does not allow an individual peer evaluator to rate a peer as less than “proficient.” A peer educator who believes the educator to be performing at a level less than “proficient” must hand the case over to a panel.

The panel then reviews the educator’s performance, and only then can the educator receive “needs improvement” or “unsatisfactory” as a rating. The low number of “needs

- improvement” and “unsatisfactory” ratings in the district suggests that the panel review is not used appropriately or consistently and that peer evaluators may feel unwilling to use the panel for review. This decreases the effectiveness of the PAR system to give meaningful evaluative reviews.
- a) Interviewees said that peer evaluators were not given release time to complete observations. Limited peer evaluator capacity detracts from the integrity of peer reviews.
- C. The feedback provided to educators through the evaluation system is of inconsistent quality, due in part to high evaluator caseloads, and is often based on limited sources of evidence.
1. The district has not taken any measures to improve the caseload distribution of evaluation responsibilities across evaluators, a barrier to being able to provide regular and meaningful feedback.
    - a) The caseload of a given evaluator depends upon each school’s budget and capacity. Interviewees stated that in small schools with fewer administrators, a single school leader could be responsible for the vast majority of staff evaluations. One interviewee noted, “There are some spots in central office and schools where caseloads are extremely heavy. This is a barrier to providing strong feedback.” Another interviewee stated, “Some schools have too many people to evaluate and others not enough.”
    - b) While interviewees stated that the district provided training on distributive leadership during the August Leadership Institute, there were no districtwide measures for acceptable caseloads to guide school leaders. Interviewees commented, “Centrally, there is not a lot of guidance;” “This remains a problem;” and “This is an ongoing challenge.” Further, there was consensus across interviews that even though this was an area elevated in the 2020 District Review Report, no changes have been made since then.
  2. A review of evaluations included limited sources of evidence. For instance, student feedback is not systematically included as part of evaluations to provide a meaningful mechanism for educator improvement, which is required by Massachusetts regulations.
    - a) Most often, feedback on the formative or summative evaluation was derived from only 1-2 classroom observations and a single set of artifacts.
    - b) Interviewees stated that the district had systems in place to collect student feedback, such as the Panorama online system. However, based on the team’s review of a sample of educator evaluation files, student feedback was not typically included as evidence or

integrated into the evaluation process. Of a sample of 20 teacher evaluation files, student feedback was referenced in 0 (zero) files.

- c) The current BTU CBA has not been updated to reflect expectations for the use of student feedback in educator evaluations. This is a required source of evidence according to Massachusetts regulations (603 CMR 35.07).
- D. The educator evaluation system is not appropriately used to inform staffing decisions in cases of reorganization (e.g., due to declining enrollment or other budgetary reasons), as required by state law. Such practices may have impacts on the district's initiatives to diversify its educator workforce.
1. According to the BTU CBA, "Employees will be laid off in reverse order of seniority within a program area. A senior employee within a program area with notice of layoff may exercise seniority by displacing the most junior teacher in all of the other program areas in which he or she is qualified."
    - a) One interviewee noted, "When we are saying we need to close a classroom, we are looking at the list and seeing who is the least senior. [...] This is a common frustration for principals. What systems are we holding to? What is in the best interest of the students? [Principals are] literally having to get rid of talent."
  2. This practice is not in accordance with Massachusetts statutory requirements (Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 71, §42), which require that indicators of job performance (including overall ratings from educator evaluations) and the best interest of students be included as primary factors in such decisions.
  3. [According to research](#), these "last-in first-out" policies, such as Boston's, result in inequitable outcomes wherein educators of color, who are more likely to be newer teachers, are more likely to be subject to reductions in force.
    - a) This works in direct opposition to the district's efforts to diversify its educator workforce. Interviewees noted that the seniority clause led to educators of color being displaced at greater rates than White educators.

**Impact:** The educator evaluation system can serve an important role in providing educators with valuable feedback to improve their teaching practice. Without a consistent practice of identifying ineffective teachers, who can then receive appropriate supports, students will not receive the high-quality instructional experiences that they deserve. District systems and policies, including the peer evaluation process, layoff provisions, and the use of all available indicators within the evaluation process, impede a fully accurate picture of educator performance and retention of effective educators.

- 2. Despite the development of quality professional learning offerings, equitable educator access to professional development is a challenge. The district lacks mechanisms to ensure that all educators receive high-quality professional development and can take advantage of the district’s enhanced PD offerings.**
- A. School leaders have significant decision-making about professional development for their staff. While the district directs a portion of the PD hours for educators focused on compliance-based and mandatory trainings (e.g., mandated reporter trainings, BPS policies and procedures, etc.), the majority of PD hours are determined at the school level. For all professional development that takes place at the school level, school teams can make use of district PD resources on an opt-in basis, and access varies widely across the district.
1. One district leader stated, “A school leader can be more directive, but as a district we have not been directive.”
  2. School superintendents are charged with supporting this decision-making at the school level; however, there appears to be limited formal oversight about what PD must be provided during school-based PD time.
  3. While the Vector platform is an important knowledge management platform (providing the district with user data on PD access and completion), school-based PD is not consistently monitored to ensure alignment to school or district priorities or student learning needs.
- B. There is no coherent district-wide plan for how high-quality PD can be equitably accessed by educators across the district.
1. Interviewees told the team that some school leaders and ILTs were better able to leverage professional learning opportunities to effectively meet the needs of their educators and students than others, leading to disparities in what was accessed or made available at the school level.
  2. According to several BPS school superintendents, equitable access to professional development “is really hard to accomplish with the structure that we have right now,” with others agreeing that “we have a series of schools with drastically different resources.” District leadership concurred, acknowledging that “we have multiple approaches [to ensuring high quality PD] but need a coherent plan.”
  3. Interviewees cited new PD resources slated for the 2022-2023 school year that may support improved access but did not cite any forthcoming changes in oversight or accountability for school-level decision-making.

- a) Several interviewees described and documents reinforced a “huge investment in FY23 for professional development,” to drive increased school-level access to and adoption of district PD offerings, including 20 literacy coaches (two per region), turnkey PD modules for school-level implementation, and tiered supports for school leaders to effectively lead instructional learning teams (ILTs) based on the district’s priorities.
  - b) Another district leader stated, “our school superintendents will have more responsibilities to help guide that conversation in the future... It will continue to be a messy process, but a bit more structured with school superintendents and academics working together.”
4. In the District Priorities Document, the district has articulated a goal of aligning Equitable Literacy professional development to individual educator goals, but the district lacks a system or accountability mechanism to ensure follow through.
- a) In the 2022-2023 school year, all QSPs will have goals aligned to one of the five components of equitable literacy, and school leaders will be held accountable to those goals through their performance evaluations.
  - b) However, there are no accountability or oversight mechanisms established to ensure that individual teachers’ goals align with the district’s Equitable Literacy focus. Interviewees said that goal-setting by teachers varied widely across schools.
  - c) This lack of alignment may perpetuate barriers to ensuring coherence and access to high-quality professional development, particularly as it relates to equitable literacy.
- C. Contractual policies limit the extent to which schools can respond to the learning needs of their teachers and students, and effectively access professional learning across the district.
1. The CBA with the BTU currently restricts the number of PD hours for teachers in traditional schools to 30 hours (12 district-led PD hours plus 18 school-based PD hours). In conjunction with timelines that require approval of the PD calendar in the spring of the prior year, this cap limits the extent to which schools can respond to the learning needs of their teachers and students.
    - a) Interviewees noted that in the 2022-2023 school year, schools will be required to use 15 hours of their school-based PD hours on Equitable Literacy, leaving many traditional schools with only three remaining hours of available school-based PD time.
    - b) There was widespread agreement across interviews that this cap limited the district in implementing its instructional priorities and prevented many schools from meeting the needs of their students.

**Impact:** Without clearer accountability mechanisms and systems to ensure equitable access to high quality professional development across the district, there will continue to be disparities in access to high quality professional learning, inconsistencies in the implementation of the district’s instructional focus, and potential for misalignment between teacher and student learning needs and available professional development.

## Recommendations

- Develop systems to ensure access to high-quality professional development for all staff. Increase the number of school-based hours for Professional Development in traditional schools to make access to PD more equitable, and to ensure the ability of school leaders and Instructional Leadership Teams (ILT) to be responsive to the teaching and learning needs of their individual school communities. Create systems to monitor and ensure that all educators receive high-quality professional development that supports school- and district-wide priorities, with mechanisms to track impact of professional development on teaching and learning.
- Bring the evaluation system fully into compliance with regulatory requirements and remove barriers to its effective use to promote educator growth, provide meaningful feedback, and ensure accountability. Incorporate student feedback into evaluations as a required source of evidence. Revisit the Peer Assistance Review process such that peer evaluators can continue to play a role in distributing evaluator responsibilities and are positioned to provide meaningful feedback to support educator growth, while ensuring that educators who continue to struggle or require a Directed Growth or Improvement Plan are identified appropriately and consistently.
- The district should work to create a culture of continuous improvement by working with educators and administrators to develop and implement a commonly agreed upon process through which educators can dispute evaluations that they find to be true or unfair in a meaningful and productive manner.
- Expand and develop mechanisms to ensure that evaluator caseloads are manageable so that evaluators have the capacity to provide meaningful feedback that improves educator practice.

## Resources

- [Collecting Evidence of Teaching and Learning: Implementation Resource](#) provides recommendations and strategies for using observations, measures of student learning, and staff, student, and family feedback to promote meaningful feedback and growth in culturally responsive practice.
- [Quick Reference Guide: Opportunities to Streamline the Evaluation Process](#) is designed to help districts reflect on and continuously improve their evaluation systems:
  - What's working? What are the bright spots?
  - How can we streamline the process to stay focused on professional growth and development?
  - What do we need to adjust to ensure our system is valuable to educators and students?

- [DESE's Online Platform for Teaching and Informed Calibration \(OPTIC\)](#) uses videos of classroom instruction to simulate brief, unannounced observations. Groups of educators, such as a district leadership team, watch a video together and then individually assess the educator's practice related to specific elements from the Model Classroom Teacher Rubric and grade-aligned content standards, and provide the educator with written feedback. Through real-time data displays, the group members can then see how their conclusions compare to each other, as well as educators throughout the state.



# Assessment

## Contextual Background

The data and assessment functions within the Boston Public Schools (BPS) fall to the Office of Data and Accountability (ODA) under the leadership of the Chief Accountability Officer and the Senior Executive Director of Data and Accountability. The Senior Executive Director has direct responsibility for overseeing and managing ODA's 5 teams and its 25 staff members. As described on the ODA website, the overall purpose of this office is to "facilitate district and schoolwide access to information for making data-driven decisions that advance educational equity, opportunity, and achievement for all students." The ODA website lists five priorities for the office:

1. Provide high-quality, relevant, and timely data and reports to all stakeholders in the district
2. Lead an ambitious research agenda that advances educational equity, opportunity, and achievement for all students
3. Define, articulate, and support a comprehensive assessment strategy for the district
4. Provide differentiated data inquiry support to schools districtwide
5. Build and foster the necessary culture for a performance management system in the district.

## Administration of State Assessments

The administration of federal and state assessments falls under the Research team within ODA. The team coordinates the districtwide administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), ACCESS for ELs, and MCAS. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the office has also taken on responsibility for working with DESE to award the Modified Competency Determination based on completed coursework to students who were unable to take the grade 10 assessment in 2020.

## Administration of District Assessments

The Assessment team within ODA handles coordination of the district formative and interim assessment administrations. In the 2021-2022 school year, the following formative assessments were required for all schools in the district:

- PALS/Heggerty – grade K1 (two times per year)
- NWEA MAP Reading Fluency – grades K2-2 (three times per year)
- NWEA MAP Growth Reading and Math – grades 3-11 (two times per year)

This requirement was a departure from past administrations when the assessments were optional for schools and participation varied greatly from school to school. In 2022, a majority of schools assessed at least 80 percent of students in the winter MAP Growth Reading and Math administrations. The results for these assessments are available to parents and guardians.

The use of interim assessments as a district-wide practice is not fully developed. These assessments are strongly recommended by the district and BPS educator-developed interim assessments exist in multiple subjects, but the lack of standardized curriculum across the district makes a district-wide policy on implementation of a required interim assessment program a challenge.

### **Professional Learning and Data Coaching**

Professional learning about data literacy is the responsibility of the Assessment team within ODA. The team develops its curriculum primarily around assessment data and helps educators learn how to use data effectively to shape instructional strategies to improve outcomes for all students. These efforts are complimented by the Data Inquiry team within ODA which uses Data Driven Instruction (Paul Bambrick-Santoyo) and the Data Wise improvement Process from the Harvard School of Graduate Education to lead educators through a collaborative coaching process of data inquiry.

### **Data System Management**

The organizational management of the district Student Information System (SIS) falls under the Information Technology (IT) office. The SIS serves as a central system used to house all student information, track student enrollment, maintain student and staff schedules, and provide access to valuable information to educators about their students. The SIS is also the primary source for the district's federal and state reporting responsibilities, although responsibilities for individual collection submissions fall to multiple offices in BPS.

## Strength Findings

**1. The Office of Data and Accountability provides valued supports to central office staff and school-based educators, including developing and promoting the use of a balanced assessment system and providing robust data inquiry coaching. Consistent district-wide use of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) growth assessment is a notable improvement from the 2020 District Review Report.**

A. The Office of Data and Accountability (ODA) is structured to support both central office staff and school-based educators in a comprehensive and cohesive way. This is highlighted by the efforts of the Assessment and Data Inquiry teams in building data literacy, a balanced use of assessments, and a well-developed, data inquiry coaching model.

1. The Office of Data and Accountability is composed of 25 staff members who are divided into five different teams under the leadership of the Senior Executive Director of ODA. The Senior Executive Director reports to the Chief Accountability Officer on the superintendent's Executive Team. The five teams located within the group are Research, Analytics, Assessment, Data Inquiry and Performance Management. Each of the five teams has a supervisor (one is currently vacant) who reports to the Senior Executive Director.

B. The assessment strategy for the district has improved since the 2020 District Review Report and ODA has led an encouraging implementation with room for continued growth.

1. Within the last three years, the district has adopted a more consistent approach to formative assessment. Prior to the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, ODA released the "SY21-22 BPS Assessment Memo Strategy and Expectations" document which detailed the formative and summative assessments available to schools and the expectations for each (required vs. optional).

a) Whereas previous assessment strategies have allowed individual schools to choose which assessments would be offered, ODA communicated that PALS/Heggerty (grade K1), MAP Reading Fluency (grades K2-2) and MAP Growth Reading/Math (grades 3-11) would be required during the 2021-2022 school year. While student participation was just over 50 percent across the district, the majority of schools assessed at least 85 percent of students. It will be important for BPS to have consistent participation across all schools in the years ahead to ensure a common performance baseline for all students in the district.

b) In addition to the required formative assessments, ODA also strongly recommends the use of interim assessments in ELA/math (grades 2-11) and science (grades 3-10). BPS educator-developed interim assessments are available to be administered using the

Illuminate platform. While these assessments are not required, multiple interviewees noted increased participation in the 2021-2022 school year.

- c) The district has also increased its communication with families about how students are performing on the formative assessments. The district provided examples of letters sent to parents (with translations available) explaining how students performed and what the results meant.
- C. With increased participation in required formative assessments, ODA has done a substantial amount of work on increasing the data literacy of BPS educators through a series of professional development activities and coaching designed to meet participants where they are in their learning. The district provided numerous documents (e.g., Data Dive 101 and Data Dive 201) to the review team detailing the professional learning content geared toward data literacy. While finding time for educators to participate in this type of professional learning towards data literacy can be challenging, the content provided was comprehensive and flexible depending on the knowledge base of the learner.
- D. The professional development around data literacy has enabled ODA to implement a robust Data Inquiry coaching model for school leaders and educators in the district.
1. Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, the district made the decision to implement the Data Inquiry Facilitation (DIF) process in all Transformation Schools (31 low performing schools in the district). This decision enabled ODA to focus its efforts on a subset of schools and multiple interviewees confirmed that the goal was to expand the DIF process into additional schools in future school years.
  2. The “Foundations of Inquiry (1-4)” series is an example of how increased data literacy can serve as the foundation for a robust coaching model on the cycle of data inquiry. Each of four installments of the series is additive, well-paced and challenges the learner to discover more opportunities for learning with data.
  3. The direct coaching models used by the DIF process are illustrated below and are a well-rounded approach to developing a culture of data use in a school.

Direct Coaching Models:				
	Assessment Literacy	Observation & Feedback	ILT Coaching	School-wide Inquiry
<b>Intended Outcomes</b>	Principals will be able to set up a system for learning about, implementing, and sustaining a school-wide assessment strategy to monitor student learning progress. School leaders and teachers will be able to explicitly examine outcomes by student group to support equity of opportunity for all students.  As a result of this work, ILTs and CPTs will engage in effective progress monitoring.	School leaders design and implement a uniform, structured, and cohesive model of observing instruction and providing feedback.  Coaches engage in observation and feedback that supports teachers in understanding how instructional decisions must be rooted in culturally responsive practices that impact student learning.	Principals and ILT Facilitators create a highly effective ILT focused on instructional improvements for students outside the sphere of success and the development of shared teacher leadership that is connected to the work of collaborative structures.  As a result of the work of ILT, teacher leaders will be better equipped to lead teams to utilize and respond to student learning data for students outside the sphere of success and plan for all students to achieve in their individual classrooms and in collaborative spaces (CPTs, ILTs).	School Leaders, Transformation Coaches, and CPT facilitators build thriving teams that engage in a shared collaborative inquiry structure in order to address unfinished learning.  ILT and CPTs support educators to increase their impact on student outcomes by infusing new, research-based instructional practices that are responsive to student learning data.

*Who will receive coaching?*

School Leader	✓	✓	✓	✓
ILT	✓	✗	✓	✓
Admin Team	✓	✓	✗	✓
Trans. Coach	✓	✓	✓	✓
CPT Facilitator	✗	✗	✗	✓
Intensity	■■	■■■	■■■	■■■■
Coaching Visits	10 targeted half days	10 - 15 Full Days	10-15 FULL days	15-20 Full Days

**Impact:** Implementing a consistent and balanced assessment system coupled with improved communication of results to families has provided a more consistent view of student performance throughout the district. ODA has strategically paired this with a quality professional learning series developed around data literacy and multi-tiered data coaching led by trained facilitators to establish a culture of data use for improving student outcomes.

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

**1. The district lacks the necessary systems and internal controls at the central office and school levels to ensure accurate data reporting on key indicators. DESE's reported graduation and dropout rates for the district are likely inaccurate due to a failure by BPS to ensure that schools possess appropriate documentation to withdraw an enrolled student.**

A. The district does not have controls in place within the central office to ensure that data reporting requirements from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education are met in a timely and accurate way.

1. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has four main collections of data that are required from all public school districts in the Commonwealth:

- Student Information Management System (SIMS): data collection containing directory, demographic, and programmatic information on all publicly funded students in the Commonwealth.
- Student Course Schedule (SCS): data collection containing description of all courses being taken by a student and the resulting credit/mark information.
- Education Personnel Information Management System (EPIMS): data collection containing the directory, demographic, and assignment information for all public school educators in the Commonwealth.
- School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR): data collection containing offense and discipline information for all publicly funded students in the Commonwealth.

2. Multiple central office groups within BPS have most recently been responsible for reporting each of the collections to DESE. The Office of Data and Accountability (ODA) within BPS does not have responsibility for the data submission process within BPS.

a) In October 2021, SIMS, SCS, was handled by a one staff member from the Information Technology (IT) group and SSDR was handled by another IT group member. EPIMS was handled by a staff member from the Office of Human Capital (OHC).

b) Interviewees suggested that there was some interaction between offices surrounding the timely and accurate reporting of data to DESE, but there was no evidence of a cohesive process implemented across the central office.

3. BPS has not fully met the DESE data reporting requirements for each of the last three years and submitted data are often late and incomplete.

- a) A key tenet of the DESE data collection system is a series of cross validations between three collections to check for the following:
    - i. Every student submitted as enrolled in the district is taking at least one course.
    - ii. Every course being taken by a student has an educator assigned to it.
    - iii. Every course being taught by an educator has at least one student in it.
  - b) BPS has not been able to meet these conditions in the data submitted to DESE as students are often reported as being in courses without an assigned educator as an example. The incompleteness leaves the overall quality of the data in question.
  - c) Multiple interviewees confirmed that the cross-validation requirement could not have been met due to the quality of the data and the amount of time required to meet the reporting requirements.
4. Data reporting to DESE is viewed internally at BPS as primarily a compliance exercise with inadequate attention paid to the quality of the data being submitted.
- a) Multiple interviewees stated that the goal of the reporting was to complete required state reporting by the deadline if possible and there were limited procedures in place within the central office to ensure a high level of data quality.
  - b) This prioritization can be seen in the manner that DESE Data Quality Summary Reports (DQSR) are handled internally.
    - i. DESE provides a series of 18 DQSRs to every district. Each report contains a district summary and a summary for each school across each report. These reports can be run and used to check the quality of the data being submitted across several areas (e.g. enrollment, demographics, and program participation).
    - ii. Best practice around the use of the DQSRs involves a careful review of the reports across multiple offices so multiple stakeholders can review the quality of the submission.
    - iii. These reports can be run by the district once the district has submitted the data, but before the superintendent certifies it for DESE use. The superintendent certification statement attests that “summary reports have been reviewed and are accurate.”

- iv. At the time of the review, the most recent DQSRs prior to the review were from the October 2021 data collection cycle. The DQSRs were requested to be run by BPS on November 10, 2021 at 9:23am and then the data were certified at 10:59am on the same day. Multiple interviewees confirmed that the DQSRs were not shared with program offices or BPS leadership prior to the Superintendent certification.
- B. The district has not implemented the necessary controls to ensure all schools possess appropriate documentation before withdrawing an enrolled student from school. As a result, student enrollment data submitted to DESE and used to calculate important statistics such as the cohort graduation rate and the annual dropout rate, are likely inaccurate.
- 1. The enrollment of students in BPS is controlled through its Follett Aspen Student Information System (SIS). The SIS enables the district and each school to continuously update information on all students and is used to maintain the master schedule for all schools.
    - a) A student's enrollment status, demographic status, class schedule, and transcript are all contained within the SIS.
    - b) Any changes to a student's record are maintained at the school level and are accessible to the district through a secure permissions system maintained by the district Information Technology (IT) department.
    - c) The changes are continuously communicated to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) through the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) and stored within its data collection systems.
    - d) Student data are "certified" three times per school year. As part of this process, the superintendent confirms that "all data submitted from my district are correct to the best of my knowledge and belief."
  - 2. Federal A133 Audits conducted in 2014 and 2015 identified a "significant deficiency" in the way BPS was reporting students as withdrawn from school without the appropriate documentation to justify the withdrawal.
    - a) The 2014 audit tested 16 students who were reported by schools as leaving BPS for a reason other than graduation or dropping out of school. BPS was unable to provide appropriate documentation justifying the withdrawal for 15 out of the 16 students. The audit concluded that BPS was "potentially misstating the number of students in the adjusted cohorts used by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to determine the four-year adjusted cohort rate."



- i. In their response to the 2014 audit, BPS committed by June 30, 2015 to “centrally generate a list of withdrawals by schools (with reasons) and will document each withdrawal within the BPS Student Information System” and to “announce the process that needs to be followed to track student withdrawals to ensure transfers are documented and that these students are removed from the cohort.”
    - b) The 2015 audit tested 40 students that were reported by schools as leaving BPS for a reason other than graduation or dropping out of school. BPS was unable to provide appropriate documentation justifying the withdrawal for 32 out of the 40 students. This audit reached the same conclusion as the 2014 audit regarding potential misstating of cohort sizes.
      - i. In their response to the 2015 audit, BPS committed by June 30, 2016, to again generate the same list of withdrawals and committed to ensuring documentation collected met the following standards:
        - If student is transferring to another school or educational program that culminates in the award of a regular high school diploma:
          - If the new school is within the State –a record from the State’s data system.
          - Student records from the receiving public or private high school or educational program.
          - A written record of a response from an official in the receiving school or program acknowledging the student's enrollment.
        - If student emigrated to another country – documentation of the conversation with the parent/ guardian in writing and inclusion in the student's file on SIS.
        - If student is deceased – an obituary or death certificate.
  - b. Additional audits in 2018, 2019 and 2020 included a review of 40 students, with 7, 15 and 16 students missing documentation in each year’s audit, respectively.
- C. On September 28, 2021 a memo titled “Important Request for Documentation for Student Withdrawals” was sent to all Heads of Schools, guidance staff, and secretaries in BPS from Corey Harris (Chief of Schools) and Nathan Kuder (Chief Financial Officer).
  1. This memo detailed the need to “accurately record and document all students who do not report (DNR) and well as students who withdraw.” In addition, the memo detailed nine types of acceptable documentation for schools when coding students as a withdrawal (direct language from 9/28/21 memo):
    - a) Record from state’s data system (Edwin), we get these automatically

- b) A written request for a student's records from a receiving public or private high school or an educational program (that culminates in a regular high school diploma)
  - c) Written record of a response from an official receiving school or program acknowledging the student's enrollment
  - d) Written confirmation that a student has moved to another country. For example, if a parent informs a school administrator that the family is leaving the country, the school administrator may document this conversation in writing
  - e) A photo of an airplane ticket
  - f) Letter from a parent or guardian updating the school enrollment status of their child
  - g) Copy of obituary
  - h) Copy of death certificate
  - i) Letter from the BPS Office of Expanded Learning Time indicating an approved Educational Plan for homeschooling
- D. As part of the Follow-Up District Review, DESE conducted a sample study comparable to those conducted in the 2014 and 2015 audits. This sample included students who were coded as transferring to a private school or transferring out-of-state in certified data to DESE. BPS was provided a list of 40 students from the 2021 graduation cohort who met these criteria and asked to provide appropriate documentation for the withdrawal. All of the students in the requested sample were reported as withdrawn after the 2014 and 2015 audits and BPS had an opportunity to update the enrollment status of all of the selected students as part of a larger data correction process in October 2021.
1. While some progress has been made in appropriately documenting withdrawals since the 2014 and 2015 audits, there are no consistent controls in place to ensure that withdrawals have the necessary documentation to be coded as such. Additionally, BPS does not have a sufficient confirmation protocol as part of their review prior to certifying the data with DESE.
  2. Within the requested sample, appropriate documentation in accordance with the standards set by BPS both in their response to the 2015 A133 audit and the September 28, 2021 memo was not provided for 13 of the 40 (33%) students in the requested sample.
  3. Within the 13 students for whom appropriate documentation was not provided, there was a range of responses from BPS.
    - a) 6 of the 13 students were coded as transferring to a private school or transferring out-of-state with no documentation to justify the use of the withdrawal code.
    - b) Documentation for the remaining 7 of the 13 students came in the form of an internal school-based document or other communication (e.g. photocopy of text message from a teacher) that multiple interviewees confirmed did not meet the standard required by

BPS. Multiple interviewees confirmed that BPS had not checked whether appropriate documentation existed prior to the superintendent's certification of the data with DESE.

- c) In some instances, the documentation was received in response to the audit request for this review and was not in place at the time that the actual withdrawal occurred.

**Impact:** The absence of a cohesive approach to timely and accurate submission of data to DESE raises questions about the quality of publicly reported information. In addition, an accurate accounting and reporting on the status of students once they exit BPS is paramount in guaranteeing the accuracy of statistics such as the annual dropout rate and cohort graduation rate. Although some improvements have been made in collecting documentation to justify the use of specific withdrawal codes, it is clear some student information is being improperly coded. As a result, the annual dropout rate and the cohort graduation rate have likely been inaccurately reported by DESE to the general public as a result of inaccuracies in the underlying data provided by BPS. Only a sample of data from one year was reviewed so it is not possible to quantify the magnitude of the misreported rates, but there is evidence to suggest that the annual dropout rate for BPS would be higher and the cohort graduation rate for BPS would be lower if BPS had certified accurate data.

## Recommendations

- Develop an accountability structure to ensure that all schools participate in required district assessments. Requiring schools to participate in certain formative assessments was a critical first step to learning about the progress being made by students throughout the district, but participation in the 2021-2022 school year still varied across the district. Without full participation on required assessments, the district lacks consistent information on the progress being made by all students in the district.
- Develop a professional learning plan to incorporate all or parts of the Data Inquiry Facilitation (DIF) process in all schools across the district. With the recent decision to concentrate the DIF process in Transformation Schools, many schools have lost access to this valuable tool. This intensive professional learning and coaching model can serve as a valuable tool to create a culture of data use to improve student outcomes in all schools. While the decision to focus direct coaching on the lowest performing schools in the district is understandable, all schools would stand to benefit from access to this program. Given the hands-on nature of the coaching model, resourcing a district-wide coaching model will be challenging so the district should consider ways to formalize parts of the DIF process in all schools as an interim step before scaling to full implementation.
- Urgently overhaul the process management of required reporting to DESE. The current structure of different offices having oversight of reporting responsibilities without a centralized management function has resulted in a process that lacks communication and cohesion. A reimagined structure that places responsibility for all required reporting to DESE under one office would allow for more timely and accurate reporting. In addition, the district should place a greater emphasis on the quality of the data submitted to DESE so that the reporting requirements can be fully met in a timely and accurate way for the first time in years.
- Immediately develop and implement an audit procedure to ensure that school-level student and educator data entered are accurate. This procedure should be implemented to take place prior to certification of the data with DESE in each reporting cycle. A particular emphasis should be placed on the student enrollment information to ensure that schools have proper documentation in hand prior to changing the enrollment status of a student. This audit responsibility should fall to the same office referenced above to ensure a proper level of coordination and cohesion in the data reporting process.

# Financial and Asset Management

## Contextual Background

This Financial and Asset Management section focuses on BPS's administration of this historic, one-time infusion of federal ESSER dollars, along with supplemental funds dedicated for special education services from the American Rescue Plan Act, the facilities and maintenance of the district's schools, and BPS transportation services to students.

The BPS FY2022 budget is \$1.295 billion, which represents an increase of about 2.9 percent, or \$36 million, over the previous year's budget. The district's budgeting process distributes funding to schools based on a weighted student formula, which allocates more resources to schools that have a greater proportion of high needs students. In terms of the most recently available historical spending data (fiscal year 2020), net school spending by the city for education was \$1.189 billion, exceeding the state requirement by 28 percent. The district's per in-district pupil expenditure for fiscal year 2020 was \$24,020, 37 percent above the state average of \$17,575. Teacher salaries averaged \$105,235, which is the fifth highest in the state among all districts (the state average is \$84,589) and highest among all cities.

BPS has been the recipient of approximately \$435 million in federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief ("ESSER") funds, designed to help districts respond to and recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The district has experienced an overall decrease in student enrollment over several years, a 17 percent decrease since 2009. The district reported 55,923 enrolled students as of October 1, 2008 during the 2008-2009 school year and 46,169 students as of October 1, 2021 during the 2021-2022 school year. Overall public school enrollment in the state decreased by 5% during the same period of time.

The City of Boston has made financial commitments for the repairs and renovations of existing school buildings as well as the construction of new schools through the BuildBPS initiative. The district works in partnership with the city's public facilities department to accomplish the goals related to capital plan improvements while day-to-day cleaning, maintenance, and repair services are accomplished by the district's building services and planning and engineering departments.

Since 2020, the district has identified and partially implemented several facility initiatives to improve capital planning and facility maintenance. The district has increased staffing in specific areas within the facilities departments, including an executive director of facilities who oversees both building services and planning and engineering departments.

The transportation budget represents one of the largest department allocations within BPS. The budget for FY22 is over \$137 million. The transportation team interacts and reports on a regular basis with the finance team. The TransDev contract makes up most of the budget; other large line items include

approximately \$6.5 million on bus lease and debt payments, \$17.5 million for out-of-district transportation, and \$6.6 million on public transit for grades 7-12. Transportation services for non-BPS students (e.g., charter school students, private school students, and parochial school students) are included in the district's total transportation spending.

For high-quality transportation services to be delivered to BPS students, key performance indicators identified by the district and its vendor must be effectively addressed, including the performance issues exacerbated by the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, which has expired at the time of the review.

Many of the key leaders of the BPS Operation team are new in their current positions. Indira Alvarez, Chief of Operation, was hired in April 2021; Teresa Neff-Webster, Deputy Chief of Operations, was hired in June 2020; Brian Forde, Executive Director of Facilities was hired in July 2021; and Dan Rosengard, Assistant Director of Customer Relations and School Support, was promoted into this position in July 2021. In addition, James Folk, TransDev's BPS General Manager, was hired in September of 2020.

## Strength Findings

1. **The district has significant funding available and is leveraging city capital funds, grants, and other one-time funds to support targeted school and student needs. Since 2020, BPS has executed several urgent facility priorities, including bathroom facility renovations (which were identified as a priority in the MOU). The “Quality Guarantee” framework and investments from the City of Boston are supporting initiatives including equitable school-level staffing, and the district has developed a strong initial process for engaging stakeholders and allocating federal relief (ESSER) funds.**
  - A. BPS is leveraging the district’s maintenance budget, the city’s capital budget, and grants from the Massachusetts School Building Authority’s (MSBA) Accelerated Repair Program (ARP) to address immediate facility needs, including bathroom facility renovations, as well as air quality and drinking water upgrades. These projects were sometimes, but not consistently, aligned with the district’s equity tools and frameworks (see Challenges and Areas of Growth below).
    1. The [FY22-26 Imagine Boston Capital Plan](#) includes approximately \$741 million in total spending on facilities projects within Boston Public Schools. *(Numbers in parentheses below are [the Opportunity Index scores calculated by the district](#) for each school for the 2021-2022 school year.)*
      - a) The city’s capital plan includes approximately \$10 million towards bathroom improvements and \$12.7 million towards kitchen improvements.
      - b) As of March 2022, the district reported the completion of 29 bathroom renovations and 41 kitchen improvements in schools. DESE has confirmed at least 17 completed bathroom renovations via site visits, and also confirmed that two bathrooms on the district’s list of completed renovations appeared not to have been completed (see Challenges and Areas of Growth below).
    2. The district has made investments in school infrastructure to improve school environments. These include:
      - a) Implementation of a multi-year plan to expand access to drinking water through infrastructure upgrades, supported by \$16 million in city and federal funds.
      - b) The installation of indoor air quality (IAQ) sensors and the implementation of an [online IAQ dashboard](#); and the repair of over 12,000 windows. The district has also invested in window air conditioning units for schools without air conditioning, with installations beginning this school year and continuing through the 2022-2023 school year.

- c) The district recently submitted several MSBA Accelerated Repair Projects (ARP) proposals for boiler, roof, and/or window replacements across seven schools. As required by the MSBA, the submission includes municipal support via a city council vote.
- i. The projects were identified based on the age of the structure compared to other buildings within the district, and the maximization of the MSBA reimbursement funding for these types of larger projects.
  - ii. The ARP projects proposed for FY22 submission are the Burke High School (FY22 Opportunity Index: 0.668); Curley K-8 School (0.448); Haley Pilot School (0.458); Henderson K-12 Inclusion School (0.498); Ohrenberger School (0.429); and English High School (0.647).
- B. Funded by a three-year, \$100 million operating investment made under former Mayor Walsh, the district's "Quality Guarantee", publicly announced in February 2022, has supported strategic investments aimed at increasing quality and equity of school-level services and resources.
1. The district outlined the "Quality Guarantee" framework as: "Using a three-year, \$100M operating investment, BPS is working to guarantee a baseline of services across all schools through a high-quality experience regardless of school, program, or neighborhood."
  2. A review of the BPS website indicated that the "Quality Guarantee" is a "list of resources, opportunities and supports that should be available at every school for every classroom in the Boston Public Schools. The Quality Guarantee framework serves as a social contract between the district and the community about what should be true in every school." This includes a focus on academics, enrichment, facilities, and student and family support.
  3. School leaders and district administrators reported that the Quality Guarantee framework has helped secure certain positions for all schools, such as social workers, school nurses, family liaisons, guidance counselors, and librarians.
  4. As part of its "Quality Guarantee" framework, the district, with support from the city, has increased its funding for key staffing positions so that more students have access to necessary supports. Current funding for these positions includes the following:
    - \$16M Social Workers
    - \$8.1M Family Liaison
    - \$4.4M Instructional Facilitators
    - \$2.1M STEAM



- \$0.9M Nurses
- \$0.5M School Psychologists

For FY2022-23, the following positions are also proposed to be added as part of the Quality Guarantee framework (including some areas funded by federal emergency relief (ESSER) funds):

- \$3.9M High School Guidance Counselors
- \$4.9M Librarians
- \$2.8M School Psychologists
- \$10M K-8 Academic Counseling (ESSER)
- \$1.5M Athletics (ESSER)

- C. The district has developed a strong initial process for engaging stakeholders and allocating federal relief (ESSER) funds in alignment with district priorities.
1. BPS implemented a public engagement process to determine how to allocate the federal ESSER-II and ESSER-III grants that were awarded in 2021, as confirmed in numerous stakeholder interviews.
    - a) The district created an office devoted to overseeing the engagement, planning, and implementation of the ESSER programs, with the finance office playing a supporting role.
    - b) BPS officials organized approximately 30 community meetings across the city, as well as meetings with community partners and parent advisory councils, and interpreted all meetings into nine different languages. The district created an ESSER student commission and an ESSER community commission to further guide and refine the plans for fund use.
    - c) All BPS schools also conducted their own community outreach sessions to gather feedback about how school-level ESSER allocations should be used.
    - d) The district consulted with several organizations, including independent research institutions, to help inform the selection of ESSER investments. BPS's research office conducted an analysis to understand which students were most affected by the pandemic, so that resources could be directed to support those students.
    - e) The superintendent, after receiving stakeholder input and considering alignment to the district strategic plan, made final decisions about how the ESSER funds would be distributed.

2. Boston provided appropriate guidance to schools and conducted a school-level ESSER funding application process, as corroborated by several interviews and a document review. While planning efforts have been strong, interviewees noted that execution and progress monitoring of ESSER initiative implementation will be critical.
  - a) Boston used a weighted funding formula that allocated more ESSER-II and ESSER-III funds to schools serving more students who had been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. To receive the funding, schools submitted an application to the BPS ESSER accountability office in fall of 2021; if a school team required immediate funding for urgent services, they could apply to receive a portion of their funds early in summer 2021.
  - b) The district provided schools with a list of evidence-based supports and practices as a resource.
  - c) School ESSER applications were required to include information about how activities would support equity for student groups such as English learners, students with disabilities, and low income students, as well as align initiatives to the feedback they heard from stakeholder outreach sessions and school improvement plans.
  - d) As of mid-April, all schools had submitted plans, and all except 2 had been approved.
  - e) While interviewees spoke positively overall about the district's engagement and planning efforts, they noted concerns about effective implementation of a large number of district and school-level initiatives on a short timeline, and insufficient tracking mechanisms to ensure that the district could effectively monitor and communicate progress on ESSER investments.

**Impact:** In the years prior to this review, the district has used capital funding and other one-time funding to invest in initiatives that will have direct benefits to students. As a result of these initiatives, students will have access to more staffing supports, improved bathroom facilities, investments in air and water quality, and access to other district and school-level resources through ESSER. These initiatives are often, but not always, aligned with the district's equity planning tools and frameworks. Consistently aligning facilities renovations with the district's equity tools and strong execution and tracking of ESSER initiatives will be important next steps for BPS in this area.

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

1. **Transportation services, driven by substantial challenges with the district’s transportation contract, are significantly and inequitably affecting student learning. On-time bus arrival rates remain unacceptably low and uncovered routes can affect thousands of students each month. Many students whose morning bus routes are uncovered simply do not attend school that day, and students with disabilities are disproportionately affected.**
  - A. The Fourth Amendment to the BPS-DESE MOU provides specific measures and targets for the priority initiatives, including that the district will achieve a district-wide school bus on-time rate of 92-95 percent each month, and for the school year overall. This measure refers to the percentage of buses that arrive before the opening bell. BPS is not currently meeting this performance goal.
    1. BPS reported an 88 percent On-Time Performance (OTP) during the 2019-2020 school year and reviewers assumed that this calculation was based on data from the start of the school year until March 16, 2020.
    2. For the 2021-2022 school year, the district reporting of OTP initially did not include the district’s uncovered routes. Uncovered routes are scheduled routes for which a driver is not present and therefore are canceled for the morning and/or afternoon runs. The district implemented the calculation of the OTP that included the uncovered routes beginning in March 2022 after a DESE request in November 2021. For the 2021-2022 school year to date, BPS reported that its OTP inclusive of uncovered routes was 89 percent.
    3. The district did not provide the review team with data related to PM or afterschool bus routes, including uncovered and late routes.
  - B. Uncovered bus routes are having significant negative impacts on student attendance and access to instructional time.
    1. In January 2022 alone, there were 1,148 uncovered routes affecting an estimated 16,000 student rides based on the average number of students assigned per bus route.
    2. BPS transportation data indicated that BPS’s rate of uncovered routes for the 2021-2022 school year was 1.9 percent. This percentage of bus routes may seem insignificant, but when examining the effects on lost learning time, the impacts are extremely concerning (see table below).
    3. The district provided the review team with data about the attendance of students whose before-school routes were uncovered (canceled) over 15 specific school days in November and January.

- a) Over a period of these 15 school days of uncovered routes, the district reported that 10,586 students were affected and between 19 percent and 33 percent of those students were reported absent on 14 of the 15 school days and 49 percent were reported as absent on the 15th day, a half day of school (see table below).
- b) Students with disabilities were disproportionately affected by the uncovered routes with between 20 percent and 39 percent of students not in attendance at school on one or more days during the 15-day time period reviewed.
- c) It is likely that students eventually picked up by a bus attend school arrive well after the bell because a second run occurs after the school day begins. Interviewees reported that if a parent requests a backup bus for an uncovered run, if available, an alternative bus is sent after morning bus route are completed. It was reported that the bus is sent between 9:00am - 9:30am. As a result, these students are much more likely to arrive at school after the beginning of school.

**Table 12: Boston Public Schools Uncovered Routes and Student Attendance in November and January**

# of Days	Route Dates	Total Student Learning Days	Non-BPS <sup>3</sup> Student Learning Days	Total # BPS Student Learning Days	BPS Student Average % Absent	SWD		Non-SWD	
						Total # BPS Student Learning Days	Average % Absent	Total # BPS Student Learning Days	Average % Absent
5	11/17 - 11/23	435	124	311	19%	190	20%	121	16%
1	11/24 (half day)	35	0	35	49%	15	53%	20	45%
2	11/25 - 11/30	853	217	636	21%	295	27%	341	17%
4	1/5 - 1/12	5,265	902	4,363	33%	1,758	39%	2,605	29%
3	1/13 - 1/18	3,998	570	3,428	27%	1,061	32%	2,367	24%
<b>15</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>10,586</b>	<b>1,813</b>	<b>8,773</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>3,319</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>5,454</b>	<b>24%</b>

<sup>3</sup> Private and charter school students provided transportation by BPS

- C. Parents, families, and advocacy groups continue to express dissatisfaction with the reliability of BPS transportation, and challenges with timely communication to families exist.
  - 1. Interviewees reported that late buses were an alarming concern and that the lack of reliability was causing turbulence in their routines.
  - 2. Communication to families about morning and afternoon pick up, while improved, was inadequate.
    - a) Communication via text is used to notify families of issue with the bus route but is often untimely due to the driver attendance policy within the CBA, which allows drivers to delay routes.
      - i. Article 17 – *Absenteeism and Tardiness* states a route may not be included in the stand-by bidding until 5 minutes after the driver’s report time. The stand-by bid process could take up to 15 minutes before the driver can even begin the vehicle inspection which can delay the departure time.
      - b) A follow-up text message is sent to notify families only if an alternative bus is available to be deployed. It was reported that families understood if they did not receive a second text message, they had to find an alternative method of transportation or call for a late bus pick up if available.
- D. Many provisions in the Drivers CBA are contributing the district’s challenges with on-time arrivals and uncovered routes.
  - 1. A review of the Drivers CBA, as supplied by the district, indicated that the CBA included provisions which negatively affected student arrival time.
    - a) Specifically, Section 4 of Article 11 – *Leaves of Absences* refers to the availability of unlimited leaves of absence for drivers. Sections 7 and 8 of Article 12 – *Seniority* refers to the route bidding process and Appendix “B” Fringe Benefits; Paid Time Off.
      - i. The impact of Article 11’s unlimited leaves of absence is illustrated in Table 13 noting that 186 – 205 drivers were on leave in the weeks depicted.
      - ii. The route bidding process does not allow for student routing adjustments to be scheduled seamlessly at the beginning of the school year. Article 12; Section 7 requires that bids must start before the start of school and be posted for 3 days. The bid must contain several required items including the number of students scheduled for the route, the number of stops on the route, and the number of students at each stop. At the beginning of the school year, as routes are being revised based on late

enrollments and address changes, requiring this level of route detail is problematic. (Substantive changes to the required route information may lead to multiple grievances at the beginning of the school year.)

- iii. The impact of Appendix “B” – *Paid Time Off (PTO) Days* affects the attendance of drivers because up to three PTO days not used for sickness may be taken at the sole discretion of the employee and without notification. As such, a driver may take a day off without notification and may still be paid. This could affect uncovered and late routes.
2. At the time of this review all three contracts, United Steel Workers (drivers), Teamsters, (dispatch), and the Autoworkers (mechanics) had expired. Contract negotiations are the responsibility of TransDev. However, BPS and city leaders are involved in the negotiation process.
    - a) United Steel Workers rejected TransDev’s last and best offer in March 2022.
  3. District and TransDev leaders attributed uncovered routes to the national driver shortage. While the driver shortage may have contributed to the district’s challenge with uncovered routes, the driver status report received from the district indicated collective bargaining challenges were also a major cause of uncovered routes. The data in the table below provided to the review team indicated that the number of drivers employed by TransDev were sufficient to meet the needs of the district, but the terms of the CBA agreed to by the parties allowed for significant driver absence without adequate plans for covering those routes.
    - a) In the three-week sample of the driver status report provided to the review team, there are an average of over 250 drivers not available in a given week without adequate coverage.
    - b) In addition, the data provided in the driver status report indicated that TransDev was able to exceed the number of open positions with new hires.

**Table 13: Number of Available Drivers to Cover Routes for Boston**

<b>TransDev Driver Status</b>	<b>Week of 11/29/2021</b>	<b>Week of 1/10/2022</b>	<b>Week of 3/21/2022</b>
Employed drivers #	856	849	853
Drivers on leave #	186	199	205
<b>Expected available drivers #</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>648</b>
Resignation/Termination #	2	0	0
Average daily absences #	86	42	24
<b>Actual available drivers #</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>624</b>
<b>Active buses (drivers needed) #</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>621</b>
<b>Driver deficit #</b>	<b>-39</b>	<b>-13</b>	<b>+3</b>
Open positions #	34	39	29
New hires #	46	51	56

**Impact:** When transportation services are unreliable, family and student daily routines are disrupted, and students lose valuable instructional time. Both late bus arrivals and uncovered routes are major operational challenges for BPS. Uncovered routes in particular have substantial equity impacts: while some families are able to find other means to transport their children to school, others cannot, with the result that some students are missing full days of school. Students with disabilities are disproportionately affected.

**2. Despite some progress in identifying and addressing facilities in need of renovation and repair, the district lacks a comprehensive long-term master facilities plan and a coherent preventive/deferred maintenance plan. The district does not currently implement a transparent, inclusive, and data-informed decision-making process around facilities improvements, and lacks operational plans that appropriately address excess building capacity in the system due to persistently declining student enrollment.**

A. The district has laid the groundwork for future facilities improvement by preparing to launch a facilities condition assessment and in January 2022 implemented a new work order system and staffing investments, which are important pre-requisites to developing strategic, long-term plans for the district’s facilities.

1. The district is pursuing a Facilities Condition Assessment to establish in-depth knowledge of building conditions throughout the district.

a) The facilities assessment is slated to begin in April 2022 and will require 12-18 months to complete the process by an external vendor. This process began in 2021 through identifying funding and a public procurement process. The district identified Bureau Veritas as the vendor to complete the facilities assessment.

- b) Interviewees reported that the Facilities Condition Assessment would be used to ensure that the long-term planning reflected accurate, objective information on all building needs and conditions, including the calculation of a Facilities Condition Index.
  - 2. The district has implemented a new work order system through Asset Essentials, along with further staffing investments, to improve the day-to-day implementation of facilities repairs and renovations.
    - a) To address the need to systematically identify, track, and communicate the status of facilities work in a transparent manner, the facilities department launched a new work order system, Asset Essentials, in January 2022.
    - b) To improve performance in oversight and implementation, in 2021, the district reestablished the role of the executive director of facilities and created a new role called the assistant director of finance and operations to improve financial tracking of projects from identification to completion. Other staff investments include project managers, a data analyst, and architect.
- B. The district does not have a long-term facilities' master plan guiding the district's overall facilities planning process. The district did not provide adequate documentation to explain the rationale behind ongoing facilities decisions, including new buildings, renovations or closures.
  - 1. The district does not effectively communicate how significant capital improvements, whether new buildings or significant renovations, are determined. At the time of the review, a review of school committee meeting minutes indicated that during recent meetings, school committee members had consistently inquired into the tools and information used by the district for facilities decision-making. Responses from district personnel have been inconsistent in addressing concerns raised by the school committee. The district planned to present additional updates about facilities at the May and June 2022 school committee meetings.
  - 2. The district lacks plans to appropriately address the impact of persistently declining student enrollment in the district.
    - a) The district's enrollment has seen substantial declines over the last two decades before this review, with the 2021-2022 enrollment representing a 26 percent decline in student enrollment from 2001-2002.



**Table 14: Boston Public Schools Student Enrollment Declines Since 2002**

School Year	October 1 Enrollment	Change since 2001-2002
2001-2002	62,414	--
2011-2012	55,027	-11.8%
2021-2022	46,169	-26.0%

- b) While student enrollment declined since 2002, the overall BPS budget increased approximately by 30 percent and staffing levels remained flat over the same time period.
  - c) While declining enrollment provides an opportunity for the district to shrink the footprint of its aging facilities and focus its resources on ensuring a smaller number of quality facilities, BuildBPS does not effectively take into account the number of school buildings necessary for BPS’s student population.
3. The district has struggled to provide a timely, predictable and transparent engagement process for the school communities affected by permanent or temporary closures. Families are not assured of receiving final determinations of school closure in a timely way that allows for necessary adjustments.
- a) With the closures of the Jackson Mann K-8 School (FY22 Opportunity Index: 0.537), the Washington Irving Middle School (0.609), and the James P. Timilty Middle School (0.659) scheduled for the end of the 2021-2022 school year, the district implemented communication plans with affected communities, including stakeholder engagement meetings starting in May 2021.
  - b) In the original proposal for closure of the Irving and Timilty schools announced at the May 2021 school committee meeting, a sixth-grade expansion of some of the feeder elementary schools was not considered an option due to facilities constraints. Families of the Blackstone, Mendell, and Sumner elementary schools expressed concerns about the student experience of current fifth graders who would require multiple transitions during their K-12 experience.
  - c) Stakeholder involvement from the feeder elementary schools for the closing middle schools prompted the district to identify additional methods to expand the affected elementary schools to serve grade 6 in the 2022-2023 school year.
  - d) Interviewees reported that efforts around stakeholder engagement in decision-making have improved over time with examples including stakeholder engagement meetings and equity roundtables but noted that this could be further improved by including

stakeholders earlier in the conversations about facilities changes that affect their school community.

4. Changes that take place during the facilities planning process can be abrupt, leaving school communities to contend with shifting plans and uncertainty.
  - a) A district presentation to the school committee in May 2021 originally indicated that the district would pursue a 2022 MSBA application for the Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (FY22 Opportunity Index 0.622) with completion of the project scheduled after the 2026-2027 school year. However, the building project was not accepted by the MSBA.
  - b) The district reported at a school committee meeting in March 2022 that the project would now be pursued as a city funded capital project but did not provide additional details about a timeline.
- C. As reported in the 2020 District Review Report, the district still does not have a coherent preventive/deferred maintenance plan for school buildings, and data tracking of projects underway is inconsistent.
  1. Interviewees reported that day-to-day facilities work remained predominantly reactive rather than proactive resulting in limited long-term planning to accomplish larger and more strategic goals. If implemented with fidelity, the district's use of Asset Essentials will serve as one strategy to address this issue.
  2. District documentation to report and describe facilities improvements is limited and, in some cases, inconsistent, or inaccurate.
    - a) The district provided the review team with a list of 29 schools where "toilet room renovations" had been completed as of March 21, 2022.
      - i. Over the course of the 2021-2022 school year, as part of reporting for the BPS-DESE MOU, DESE has visited 17 schools on this list with completed bathroom renovations.
      - ii. DESE staff visited two schools on the district's "toilet room renovations" list that were reported to have been completed – the Clap Elementary School (0.599) and the Edward Everett Elementary (0.525) – on April 8, 2022, and observed aging bathrooms that had not been renovated.

- D. Stakeholders continue to express dissatisfaction with the conditions of school buildings, while limited professional development opportunities exist for custodial staff that may support near-term service improvement.
  - 1. As reported in interviews, students' experiences varied. Some students expressed concerns about the cleanliness of bathrooms and the lack of soap and towels within bathrooms. Others noted the age of buildings, issues with temperatures within the building, particularly with open windows, and chipping paint.
  - 2. The district provided limited documentation about the professional development of custodial staff. The custodial PD plan included computer training and crew chief training in addition to several annual topics related to "proper washroom cleaning" and the "five components of good service quality." How and when this training took place was unclear.
  
- E. The district is not consistently using its equity tools and frameworks in facilities repair and renovation decisions.
  - 1. It is unclear to what extent the Racial Equity Planning Tool is used to inform the decision-making process for facilities' repairs and renovations.
    - a) For instance, the Equity Impact Statement completed by the district for Accelerated Repair MSBA proposals did not include use of the Racial Equity Planning Tool.
  - 2. Interviewees said that the Opportunity Index was used to identify the highest priority school communities for bathroom and kitchen renovation and repair projects.
    - a) DESE's review found that this was sometimes, but not always, the case. For the reported bathroom projects, the schools that benefitted included the David A. Ellis Elementary School (FY22 Opportunity Index score: 0.766), Higginson/Lewis K-8 School (0.713), and Patrick Lyndon K-8 (0.232).

**Impact:** Tremendous variation remains in school building conditions throughout the district. Many buildings remain inadequate in supporting the establishment of a safe, welcoming environment for students and staff that is conducive to teaching and learning. Without transparent metrics or consistent use of the district's equity planning resources in discussions about school building repair, renovation, replacement, and closure, the district will struggle to build trust and foster effective engagement with stakeholders. Furthermore, effective operational plans must appropriately account for the substantial declining student enrollment in the system, in order to maximize the district's considerable resources to support quality facilities for all students.

## Recommendations

- Construct a transportation Request for Proposal for any new transportation contract that includes performance indicators which address on-time bus performance that are easily measured and hold the vendor and its staff directly accountable for providing dependable student service. Collaborate with city officials to address the Collective Bargaining Agreement's shortfalls, which fail students and families.
- Build on the progress and momentum being made with the current transportation communication by adding an additional notification for families affected by uncovered routes. Consider providing alternative options for uncovered routes in this communication (e.g., vouchers, parent reimbursement, etc.). Use disaggregated student data to identify the impact of uncovered routes and address the inequity that those routes have on teaching and learning, paying explicit attention to students with disabilities.
- Work closely with the city to implement BuildBPS with urgency towards addressing past challenges in implementation, including consistent use of the Racial Equity Planning Tool.
- Monitor the implementation of the new work order system and improve stakeholder knowledge of the process used to: prioritize repairs, the factors that impact the timeliness of repairs, and the process for requesting and obtaining information about the status of projects. Conduct outreach and training to school-level staff and operational leaders to ensure consistent use of the new system.
- Directly communicate the expectations and timeline for the proposed Facilities Condition Assessment to all stakeholders, including the goals and objectives of the project. Provide clear expectations of how the information will be leveraged to support the development of an equitable and informed approach for immediate and long-term facilities improvements. The completion of the Facilities Condition Assessment must result in a coherent and comprehensive master facilities plan for meeting the needs of projected student enrollment throughout the district.
- Develop a long-term strategic plan that addresses operational sustainability, including but not limited to: how many schools BPS should operate, at what size and in what buildings, and how creating efficiencies can enable each school to offer a wider range of consistently high-quality services and opportunities to all students.
- Continue efforts to conduct evaluations on certain ESSER initiatives to assess effectiveness and identify implementation successes and challenges.
- Build an internal controls group to continuously improve central office processes and ensure compliance, especially with respect to the timely and proper expenditure of grant funds, so that

the district does not resort to returning unexpended or expiring funds to DESE and/or the federal government.

- Continue with the implementation of new budgeting software to improve fiscal transparency across schools and improve school leaders' capacity to manage their schools' finances. Ensure, through the implementation of the new budgeting software, that each school has a spending plan in place so that the central office can monitor them and help support them in implementing their plans.
- Hire an outside contractor to review and reimagine the district's weighted student funding formula. The review should touch on how BPS should be restructuring its special education programming to be more inclusive and how a new weighted student funding formula could support an improved special education service delivery structure. The review should also touch on how the weighted student funding formula interacts with supplemental BPS central office investments across the schools.
- The district's chief financial officer and the city auditor or their designees should meet annually to develop a written agreement that delineates the responsibilities and the calculation process and/or amounts to be used in calculating the cost for all municipal expenditures and processes. This agreement should be communicated to all stakeholders.

# Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Schedule, Site Visit

## Review Team Members

The review was conducted from March 28 – April 1, 2022, by the following team of DESE staff:

### Standard Leads

Name	Title
Anne Marie Stronach	LEA Operations Support
Komal Bhasin	Chief School Officer
Lauren Woo	Director of Strategic Transformation
Robert Curtin	Chief Officer for Data, Assessment, and Accountability
Russell Johnston	Deputy Commissioner

### Review Team Members

Name	Title
Alyssa Hopkins	School Development Manager
Andrea Ricotta	Targeted Assistance and Partnership Associate
Christine Romancewicz	Specialized Programs Liaison
Claire Abbott	Manager of PK12 Educator Effectiveness
Ebonique Faria	School Nutrition Programs Specialist
Emily Meehan	Education Data Analyst
Erica Champagne	Director of the Office of Effective Practices
Erika Alvarez Werner	Director of Strategic Equity Initiatives
Garvy Altine	CCTE Liaison
Judith Magloire	Support Lead
Kenzie Chin	Ed Prep Coordinator
Kristin Castner	District Support Liaison
Matt Deninger	Director of Resource Allocation Strategy and Planning
Moira Connolly	Expanded Learning Time Coordinator
Nicole Scola	Manager of Science and Technology/Engineering
Rebecca Sullivan	Education Management Analyst
Shannon Clancy	Educator Effectiveness Specialist
Shay Edmond	Senior Associate Commissioner
Sibel Hughes	Assistant Director of the Office of Language Acquisition
Vani Rastogi-Kelly	Director of the Office of Public School Monitoring
Winnie Koko	Monitoring Specialist
Woody Pierre-Louis	ELA/Literacy Content Support Lead

### Consultants/Contributors

Name	Title
Deborah Steenland	Deputy General Counsel
Erica Gonzales	Accountability Coordinator
Julie Swerdlow	Consultant to the Commissioner
Regina Robinson	Deputy Commissioner

In addition, this review team was supported by the efforts of a team of professional classroom observers from the American Institutes for Research (AIR), whose report can be found in Appendix D.

### District Review Activities

Appendix C lists interview and focus group participants during the review.

During the visit, the review team conducted interviews/focus groups with middle and high-school students, parents/guardians, principals, and advocacy groups. Review team members also conducted focus groups with staff, including teachers working in elementary schools, teachers in K–8 schools, high-school teachers, special education coordinators, and language acquisition team facilitators.

The review team analyzed multiple data sets and reviewed numerous documents before and during the site visit, including:

- Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates.
- Data on the district’s staffing and finances.
- District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, transportation contracts and statistics, and the district’s end-of-year financial reports.
- A random selection of completed administrator, program, and teacher evaluations.
- Documentation used to justify data submissions related to enrollment transfers and course completion for random samplings of students.
- The 2020 Boston Public Schools District Review Report.

Additionally, the AIR classroom observation team visited a sample of 42 schools during the week of March 29 – April 1. Taken together, these schools are representative of the district in both grade span and student demographics.

- Alighieri Dante Montessori School
- Another Course To College

- Blackstone Elementary School
- Boston Collaborative High School
- Boston Community Leadership Academy
- Boston International High School & Newcomers Academy
- Boston Latin Academy
- Bradley Elementary School
- Brighton High School
- Burke High School
- Chittick Elementary School
- Community Academy of Science and Health
- Ellis Elementary School
- Excel High School
- Fenway High School
- Frederick Pilot Middle School
- Gardner Pilot Academy
- Greenwood Sarah K-8 School
- Grew Elementary School
- Haynes Early Education Center
- Henderson K-12 Inclusion School Lower
- Higginson Inclusion K0-2 School
- Holmes Elementary School
- Irving Middle School
- Kennedy John F Elementary School
- Kennedy Patrick J Elementary School
- Kenny Elementary School
- Kilmer K-8 School
- King K-8 School
- Lee K-8 School
- Madison Park Technical Vocational High School
- Mason Elementary School
- McKay K-8 School
- Orchard Gardens K-8 School
- Perkins Elementary School
- Philbrick Elementary School
- Quincy Elementary School
- Russell Elementary School
- Shaw Elementary School
- Sumner Elementary School
- Taylor Elementary School
- Tobin K-8 School



Observation team members visited 477 classes in these schools: 129 in high schools, 83 in middle schools, and 265 in elementary schools.

### Site Visit Schedule

<b>Monday</b> March 28	<b>Tuesday</b> March 29	<b>Wednesday</b> March 30
Interviews with district staff and principals; interviews with school committee members; interview with city personnel; focus groups with principals, teachers, and students; and focus groups with students' families and advocacy groups.	Interviews with district staff and principals; interview with transportation vendor; interview with city personnel; interview with teachers' association; focus groups with principals, teachers, and students; and focus groups with students' families and advocacy groups.	Interviews with district staff and principals; focus groups with principals; and focus groups with students' families and advocacy groups; and review team wrap-up meeting with the district superintendent.

## Appendix B: Enrollment, Attendance, Student Performance, and Expenditures

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the 2020-2021 school year. Data reported below may have been affected by the pandemic. Please keep this in mind when reviewing the data and take particular care when comparing data over multiple school years.

**Table 1a: Boston Public Schools  
Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, 2021–2022**

Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
All	46,169	100.0%	911,529	100.0%
African-American	13,384	29.0%	84,970	9.3%
Asian	4,107	8.9%	65,813	7.2%
Hispanic	19,843	43.0%	210,747	23.1%
Native American	127	0.3%	2,060	0.2%
White	6,997	15.2%	507,992	55.7%
Native Hawaiian	74	0.2%	788	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	1,637	3.5%	39,159	4.3%

Note: As of October 1, 2021

**Table 1b: Boston Public Schools  
Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations, 2021–2022**

Group	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
All high needs students	37,940	100.0%	81.5%	512,242	100.0%	55.6%
Students w/ disabilities	10,167	26.8%	21.9%	174,505	34.1%	18.9%
Low Income	32,854	86.6%	71.2%	399,140	77.9%	43.8%
EL and Former EL	14,038	37.0%	30.4%	100,231	19.6%	11.0%

Notes: As of October 1, 2021. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 46,507; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 920,971.

**Table 2: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Scaled Scores in Grades 3-8, 2018-2021**

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/Below
All	18,699	491.1	491.9	487.4	-3.7	496.5	-9.1
African American/Black	5,490	485.4	486.1	481.2	-4.2	486.4	-5.2
Asian	1,720	505.9	506.6	501.9	-4.0	508.5	-6.6
Hispanic/Latino	8,070	486.6	487.4	482.0	-4.6	484.3	-2.3
Multi-Race	641	498.8	499.1	497.0	-1.8	499.7	-2.7
White	2,704	506.6	507.5	504.4	-2.2	501.3	3.1
High Needs	15,239	486.8	487.4	482.6	-4.2	485.9	-3.3
Econ. Dis.	12,723	486.2	486.6	481.6	-4.6	485.2	-3.6
EL and Former EL	8,190	486.4	486.7	481.5	-4.9	482.8	-1.3
SWD	4,651	474.7	475.5	472.8	-1.9	478.1	-5.3

Next Generation MCAS Achievement Levels: 440-469 Not Meeting Expectations; 470-499 Partially Meeting Expectations; 500-529 Meeting Expectations; 530-560 Exceeding Expectations

**Table 3: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Scaled Scores in Grades 3-8, 2018-2021**

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/Below
All	18,678	488.9	490.0	479.5	-9.4	489.7	-10.3
African American/Black	5,477	482.2	482.9	471.7	-10.5	477.3	-5.6
Asian	1,727	509.7	511.9	501.8	-7.9	508.6	-6.8
Hispanic/Latino	8,056	484.2	485.0	473.4	-10.8	476.5	-3.1
Multi-Race	646	494.2	495.8	487.8	-6.4	492.1	-4.3
White	2,698	503.9	506.1	496.7	-7.2	494.3	2.4
High Needs	15,219	485.0	485.6	474.8	-10.2	479.0	-4.2
Econ. Dis.	12,701	483.9	484.5	473.4	-10.5	477.4	-4.0
EL and Former EL	8,171	486.3	486.8	475.3	-11.0	477.8	-2.5
SWD	4,654	472.4	473.6	466.7	-5.7	472.5	-5.8

Next Generation MCAS Achievement Levels: 440-469 Not Meeting Expectations; 470-499 Partially Meeting Expectations; 500-529 Meeting Expectations; 530-560 Exceeding Expectations

**Table 4: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8, 2018-2021**

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/Below
All	18,699	34%	35%	31%	-3%	46%	-15%
African American/Black	5,490	24%	25%	21%	-3%	28%	-7%
Asian	1,720	62%	63%	55%	-7%	66%	-11%
Hispanic/Latino	8,070	26%	27%	22%	-4%	26%	-4%
Multi-Race	641	47%	49%	47%	0%	51%	-4%
White	2,704	63%	62%	60%	-3%	54%	6%
High Needs	15,239	27%	27%	23%	-4%	28%	-5%
Econ. Dis.	12,723	25%	26%	21%	-4%	27%	-6%
EL and Former EL	8,190	27%	27%	22%	-5%	24%	-2%
SWD	4,651	8%	10%	11%	3%	16%	-5%

**Table 5: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8, 2018-2021**

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/Below
All	18,678	32%	33%	20%	-12%	33%	-13%
African American/Black	5,477	20%	21%	9%	-11%	14%	-5%
Asian	1,727	71%	73%	54%	-17%	64%	-10%
Hispanic/Latino	8,056	23%	24%	10%	-13%	14%	-4%
Multi-Race	646	41%	42%	31%	-10%	37%	-6%
White	2,698	60%	62%	45%	-15%	40%	5%
High Needs	15,219	25%	25%	13%	-12%	16%	-3%
Econ. Dis.	12,701	23%	23%	11%	-12%	14%	-3%
EL and Former EL	8,171	27%	28%	14%	-13%	17%	-3%
SWD	4,654	8%	10%	6%	-2%	10%	-4%

**Table 6: Boston Public Schools  
Next Generation MCAS ELA and Math Scaled Scores in Grade 10, 2021**

Group	ELA				Math			
	N (2021)	2021	State	Above/Below	N (2021)	2021	State	Above/Below
All	2,556	496.0	507.3	-11.3	2,520	491.7	500.6	-8.9
African American/Black	807	490.9	494.6	-3.7	795	485.2	486.7	-1.5
Asian	249	510.1	518.2	-8.1	248	518.1	520.9	-2.8
Hispanic/Latino	1,109	491.1	491.9	-0.8	1,087	485.3	485.3	0.0
Multi-Race	65	505.9	510.6	-4.7	64	500.0	503.9	-3.9
White	317	513.0	512.5	0.5	317	507.5	504.9	2.6
High Needs	1,918	489.7	493.3	-3.6	1,887	485.4	486.5	-1.1
Econ. Dis.	1,631	490.0	493.7	-3.7	1,603	485.4	486.6	-1.2
EL and Former EL	793	478.8	477.9	0.9	789	478.6	477.6	1.0
SWD	534	481.4	487.2	-5.8	526	474.5	479.6	-5.1

**Table 7: Boston Public Schools  
Next Generation MCAS ELA and Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grade 10, 2021**

Group	ELA				Math			
	N (2021)	2021	State	Above/Below	N (2021)	2021	State	Above/Below
All	2,556	45%	64%	-19%	2,520	38%	52%	-14%
African American/Black	807	34%	41%	-7%	795	27%	27%	0%
Asian	249	72%	80%	-8%	248	81%	80%	1%
Hispanic/Latino	1,109	37%	39%	-2%	1,087	26%	26%	0%
Multi-Race	65	60%	67%	-7%	64	53%	55%	-2%
White	317	74%	73%	1%	317	68%	60%	8%
High Needs	1,918	34%	39%	-5%	1,887	26%	26%	0%
Econ. Dis.	1,631	34%	41%	-7%	1,603	26%	27%	-1%
EL and Former EL	793	20%	19%	1%	789	16%	15%	1%
SWD	534	15%	25%	-10%	526	11%	14%	-3%

**Table 8: Boston Public Schools  
Next Generation MCAS Science Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 5 and 8, 2019-2021**

Group	N (2021)	2019	2021	State (2021)	Above/Below
All	4,640	24%	19%	42%	-23%
African American/Black	1,369	14%	10%	19%	-9%
Asian	374	51%	38%	62%	-24%
Hispanic/Latino	2,040	16%	11%	20%	-9%
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	158	42%	39%	47%	-8%
White	682	51%	45%	50%	-5%
High Needs	3,793	17%	12%	23%	-11%
Econ. Dis.	3,153	16%	11%	21%	-10%
EL and Former EL	1,974	16%	11%	18%	-7%
SWD	1,251	7%	6%	15%	-9%

NOTE: Grade 10 results for spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about CD requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>.

**Table 9: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-10, 2018-2021**

Grade	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/Below
3	3,339	33%	39%	34%	1%	51%	-17%
4	3,344	35%	33%	33%	-2%	49%	-16%
5	3,064	37%	37%	30%	-7%	47%	-17%
6	2,988	31%	36%	30%	-1%	47%	-17%
7	2,984	33%	32%	29%	-4%	43%	-14%
8	2,980	35%	35%	29%	-6%	41%	-12%
3-8	18,699	34%	35%	31%	-3%	46%	-15%
10	2,556	--	45%	45%	--	64%	-19%

**Table 10: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-10, 2018-2021**

Grade	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/Below
3	3,305	33%	34%	20%	-13%	33%	-13%
4	3,342	31%	32%	17%	-14%	33%	-16%
5	3,045	31%	34%	19%	-12%	33%	-14%
6	2,994	28%	31%	19%	-9%	33%	-14%
7	2,996	34%	33%	24%	-10%	35%	-11%
8	2,996	33%	34%	21%	-12%	32%	-11%
3-8	18,678	32%	33%	20%	-12%	33%	-13%
10	2,520	--	47%	38%	--	52%	-14%

**Table 11: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Science Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 5 and 8, 2019-2021**

Grade	N (2021)	2019	2020	2021	3-yr Change	State (2021)
5	3,014	24%	--	20%	-4	42%
8	1,626	24%	--	16%	-8	41%
5 and 8	4,640	24%	--	19%	-5	42%
10	--	--	--	--	--	--

NOTE: Grade 10 results for spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about CD requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>. In 2019 10<sup>th</sup> graders took the Legacy MCAS science test.

**Table 12: Boston Public Schools  
English Language Arts and Math Mean Student Growth Percentile in Grades 3-10, 2019-2021**

Grade	ELA				Math			
	N (2021)	2019	2021	State (2021)	N (2021)	2019	2021	State (2021)
3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
4	--	46.6	--	--	--	46.7	--	--
5	2,624	53.6	31.7	34.9	2,610	53.1	25.7	31.9
6	2,560	50.1	34.7	37.3	2,564	45.5	22.9	26.3
7	2,428	45.3	33.1	36.1	2,444	43.9	32.9	35.8
8	2,463	46.9	34.0	34.8	2,478	49.5	25.9	27.4
3-8	10,075	48.6	33.4	35.8	10,096	47.9	26.8	30.4
10	2,094	46.7	47.0	52.5	2,079	55.1	35.1	36.5

**Table 13: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3-8	10
Lee Academy EES	33%	--	--	--	--	--	33%	--
Baldwin ELC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lyon K - 8	40%	29%	21%	9%	10%	13%	20%	--
ELC/West	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ellison/Parks EES	27%	--	--	--	--	--	27%	--
East Boston EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Haynes EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Teachers Union School	78%	63%	48%	55%	18%	--	56%	--
Jackson/Mann ES	28%	21%	31%	34%	8%	13%	25%	--
Shaw ES	10%	--	--	--	--	--	10%	--
Higginson	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mattahunt	25%	24%	--	--	--	--	25%	--
Curley K - 8	51%	50%	34%	46%	11%	10%	36%	--
Beethoven ES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Carter School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sumner ES	29%	42%	29%	--	--	--	33%	--
Taylor ES	28%	30%	16%	--	--	--	24%	--
Guild ES	11%	25%	6%	44%	--	--	21%	--
Alighieri Dante Montessori School	57%	60%	--	58%	--	--	52%	--
Ellis ES	15%	22%	20%	--	--	--	19%	--
Dearborn STEM Academy	--	--	--	17%	15%	15%	16%	22%
Haley ES	43%	27%	37%	44%	22%	26%	34%	--
McKay K - 8	27%	21%	26%	18%	12%	19%	20%	--
Everett ES	30%	40%	34%	29%	--	--	34%	--
Eliot ES	91%	87%	77%	71%	38%	24%	73%	--
Mendell ES	50%	49%	53%	--	--	--	50%	--
Roosevelt ES	21%	30%	19%	18%	11%	6%	19%	--
Conley ES	31%	36%	20%	25%	--	--	26%	--
Grew ES	17%	54%	50%	--	--	--	41%	--
Holmes ES	23%	13%	26%	--	--	--	21%	--
O'Donnell ES	21%	21%	14%	21%	--	--	19%	--
Condon ES	27%	18%	27%	26%	15%	10%	21%	--
Hennigan ES	16%	30%	16%	26%	13%	15%	19%	--
Chittick ES	35%	31%	41%	--	--	--	36%	--
Otis ES	47%	31%	28%	26%	--	--	35%	--
J. F. Kennedy ES	36%	32%	37%	--	--	--	35%	--
UP Academy Holland	13%	11%	22%	--	--	--	15%	--
Philbrick ES	15%	67%	44%	--	--	--	41%	--
McCormack MS	--	--	--	14%	9%	7%	10%	--
Winthrop ES	21%	9%	18%	--	--	--	16%	--
Tynan ES	28%	35%	17%	14%	--	--	24%	--
Hurley ES	34%	45%	27%	44%	39%	45%	39%	--
District	34%	33%	30%	30%	29%	29%	31%	45%
State	51%	49%	47%	47%	43%	41%	46%	64%

**Table 13 Continued: Boston Public Schools**  
**Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3-8	10
Lee ES	23%	15%	23%	18%	14%	22%	19%	--
Manning ES	83%	74%	56%	61%	--	--	70%	--
Kilmer ES	58%	44%	41%	67%	26%	31%	47%	--
Harvard/Kent ES	63%	28%	22%	33%	--	--	35%	--
Bradley ES	58%	67%	61%	67%	--	--	63%	--
Mather ES	28%	28%	28%	--	--	--	28%	--
Tobin K - 8	28%	25%	10%	2%	4%	12%	14%	--
Perkins ES	25%	32%	45%	25%	--	--	33%	--
Mozart ES	42%	58%	43%	--	--	--	47%	--
Murphy K - 8	51%	61%	54%	60%	16%	19%	47%	--
Hale ES	44%	70%	65%	68%	--	--	63%	--
Perry ES	28%	37%	22%	24%	--	50%	30%	--
Orchard Gardens K - 8	6%	7%	17%	8%	17%	15%	12%	--
Ohrenberger ES	43%	49%	48%	38%	10%	15%	35%	--
Lyndon K - 8	72%	52%	65%	55%	22%	38%	55%	--
P. Kennedy ES	24%	44%	18%	37%	--	--	30%	--
William Henderson Lower	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dever ES	21%	19%	30%	--	--	--	23%	--
Bates ES	46%	44%	17%	--	--	--	33%	--
Quincy ES	53%	43%	44%	--	--	--	46%	--
Clap ES	50%	31%	--	--	--	--	34%	--
Adams ES	15%	31%	44%	27%	--	--	28%	--
Mason ES	22%	25%	17%	--	--	--	22%	--
S. Greenwood K - 8	14%	15%	8%	13%	10%	0%	11%	--
Gardner ES	18%	38%	39%	29%	29%	21%	29%	--
Kenny ES	54%	30%	22%	31%	--	--	33%	--
Warren/Prescott K - 8	72%	69%	50%	52%	20%	40%	55%	--
Channing ES	23%	39%	39%	27%	--	--	31%	--
McKinley Schools	--	17%	15%	--	7%	7%	9%	5%
Russell ES	44%	27%	15%	--	--	--	31%	--
Trotter ES	15%	18%	7%	6%	8%	17%	12%	--
Winship ES	64%	47%	67%	--	--	--	60%	--
Edison K-8	24%	15%	13%	31%	31%	4%	20%	--
King K-8	16%	26%	15%	35%	13%	20%	22%	--
Higginson/Lewis K-8	12%	7%	0%	0%	7%	7%	6%	--
Mildred Avenue K-8	18%	24%	18%	21%	6%	13%	17%	--
Young Achievers K - 8	17%	19%	9%	13%	6%	12%	13%	--
Mission Hill K - 8	53%	37%	19%	46%	27%	29%	36%	--
Frederick MS	--	--	--	12%	2%	6%	6%	--
Blackstone ES	36%	10%	13%	--	--	--	14%	--
William Henderson Upper	50%	36%	38%	23%	15%	23%	31%	28%
Edwards MS	--	--	--	--	1%	14%	9%	--
District	34%	33%	30%	30%	29%	29%	31%	45%
State	51%	49%	47%	47%	43%	41%	46%	64%



**Table 13 Continued: Boston Public Schools**  
**Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3-8	10
Irving MS	--	--	--	14%	8%	8%	9%	--
Timilty MS	--	--	--	15%	14%	11%	13%	--
Brighton High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7%
Boston International High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3%
Charlestown High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	19%
Community Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Excel High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7%
Burke High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	14%
East Boston High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	28%
The English High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	18%
Madison Park Tech/Voc High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	15%
Fenway High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	42%
Another Course to College	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	30%
New Mission High	--	--	--	--	23%	20%	21%	40%
Egleston Community High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin Acad	--	--	--	--	75%	63%	69%	88%
Boston Arts Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	44%
Boston Adult Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Margarita Muniz Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	23%
Boston Leadership Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	36%
Boston Latin School	--	--	--	--	88%	78%	83%	96%
Quincy Upper School	--	--	--	39%	18%	8%	26%	16%
O'Bryant Math & Science	--	--	--	--	68%	69%	68%	88%
Community Sci/Health Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	18%
Lyon Upper 9-12	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	35%
Umana Academy	10%	9%	14%	19%	26%	20%	19%	--
TechBoston Academy	--	--	--	9%	7%	6%	7%	24%
Snowden International School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	30%
Hernandez K - 8	28%	24%	14%	15%	14%	39%	22%	--
Horace Mann School for the Deaf	--	--	--	--	--	--	0%	--
Boston Collaborative High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
District	34%	33%	30%	30%	29%	29%	31%	45%
State	51%	49%	47%	47%	43%	41%	46%	64%

**Table 14: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3-8	10
Lee Academy EES	18%	--	--	--	--	--	18%	--
Baldwin ELC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lyon K - 8	20%	13%	14%	27%	0%	13%	14%	--
ELC/West	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ellison/Parks EES	3%	--	--	--	--	--	3%	--
East Boston EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Haynes EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Teachers Union School	52%	59%	36%	58%	10%	--	47%	--
Jackson/Mann ES	7%	11%	25%	17%	4%	3%	13%	--
Shaw ES	0%	--	--	--	--	--	0%	--
Higginson	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mattahunt	10%	6%	--	--	--	--	9%	--
Curley K - 8	32%	32%	28%	30%	5%	3%	23%	--
Beethoven ES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Carter School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sumner ES	15%	25%	12%	--	--	--	17%	--
Taylor ES	9%	10%	9%	--	--	--	9%	--
Guild ES	14%	16%	6%	16%	--	--	13%	--
Alighieri Dante Montessori School	36%	50%	--	33%	--	--	33%	--
Ellis ES	2%	6%	9%	--	--	--	6%	--
Dearborn STEM Academy	--	--	--	7%	6%	5%	6%	10%
Haley ES	7%	5%	13%	18%	4%	7%	10%	--
McKay K - 8	9%	6%	9%	4%	9%	10%	8%	--
Everett ES	18%	13%	3%	5%	--	--	10%	--
Eliot ES	75%	82%	66%	69%	21%	41%	66%	--
Mendell ES	32%	34%	22%	--	--	--	29%	--
Roosevelt ES	14%	8%	23%	3%	0%	8%	9%	--
Conley ES	21%	22%	0%	0%	--	--	8%	--
Grew ES	10%	29%	18%	--	--	--	19%	--
Holmes ES	7%	5%	10%	--	--	--	8%	--
O'Donnell ES	19%	13%	3%	6%	--	--	11%	--
Condon ES	11%	5%	10%	18%	11%	9%	11%	--
Hennigan ES	0%	10%	5%	9%	10%	9%	7%	--
Chittick ES	10%	6%	19%	--	--	--	11%	--
Otis ES	22%	24%	15%	24%	--	--	21%	--
J. F. Kennedy ES	15%	8%	15%	--	--	--	12%	--
UP Academy Holland	8%	0%	6%	--	--	--	4%	--
Philbrick ES	15%	17%	20%	--	--	--	18%	--
McCormack MS	--	--	--	5%	10%	2%	6%	--
Winthrop ES	6%	0%	9%	--	--	--	5%	--
Tynan ES	12%	8%	8%	5%	--	--	8%	--
Hurley ES	10%	20%	21%	8%	6%	15%	14%	--
District	20%	17%	19%	19%	24%	21%	20%	38%
State	33%	33%	33%	33%	35%	32%	33%	52%

**Table 14 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3-8	10
Lee ES	7%	4%	10%	12%	2%	2%	6%	--
Manning ES	33%	43%	31%	48%	--	--	40%	--
Kilmer ES	30%	24%	29%	67%	20%	12%	33%	--
Harvard/Kent ES	43%	24%	18%	33%	--	--	29%	--
Bradley ES	53%	24%	39%	54%	--	--	42%	--
Mather ES	10%	10%	13%	--	--	--	11%	--
Tobin K - 8	11%	4%	7%	0%	4%	3%	5%	--
Perkins ES	13%	9%	11%	13%	--	--	11%	--
Mozart ES	25%	42%	43%	--	--	--	36%	--
Murphy K - 8	41%	33%	42%	46%	21%	23%	36%	--
Hale ES	13%	32%	37%	45%	--	--	33%	--
Perry ES	12%	26%	11%	29%	--	9%	18%	--
Orchard Gardens K - 8	4%	3%	1%	1%	8%	9%	4%	--
Ohrenberger ES	25%	37%	48%	24%	12%	11%	27%	--
Lyndon K - 8	35%	18%	58%	42%	5%	4%	32%	--
P. Kennedy ES	19%	19%	3%	10%	--	--	12%	--
William Henderson Lower	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dever ES	16%	10%	9%	--	--	--	12%	--
Bates ES	30%	45%	4%	--	--	--	24%	--
Quincy ES	44%	41%	54%	--	--	--	47%	--
Clap ES	50%	0%	--	--	--	--	17%	--
Adams ES	12%	17%	20%	27%	--	--	18%	--
Mason ES	11%	13%	0%	--	--	--	8%	--
S. Greenwood K - 8	0%	3%	0%	5%	6%	0%	2%	--
Gardner ES	5%	13%	18%	23%	23%	6%	15%	--
Kenny ES	33%	2%	10%	23%	--	--	17%	--
Warren/Prescott K - 8	47%	52%	40%	34%	13%	24%	38%	--
Channing ES	12%	9%	6%	9%	--	--	9%	--
McKinley Schools	--	9%	0%	--	0%	0%	3%	0%
Russell ES	35%	8%	5%	--	--	--	19%	--
Trotter ES	12%	3%	2%	3%	13%	22%	8%	--
Winship ES	55%	13%	50%	--	--	--	43%	--
Edison K-8	6%	3%	13%	15%	11%	13%	10%	--
King K-8	6%	2%	2%	11%	15%	46%	11%	--
Higginson/Lewis K-8	8%	3%	0%	0%	12%	2%	5%	--
Mildred Avenue K-8	9%	8%	3%	4%	0%	1%	4%	--
Young Achievers K - 8	9%	5%	5%	5%	7%	3%	6%	--
Mission Hill K - 8	32%	22%	13%	15%	13%	18%	20%	--
Frederick MS	--	--	--	8%	8%	5%	6%	--
Blackstone ES	0%	0%	7%	--	--	--	1%	--
William Henderson Upper	44%	18%	34%	16%	5%	11%	21%	19%
Edwards MS	--	--	--	--	3%	5%	4%	--
District	20%	17%	19%	19%	24%	21%	20%	38%
State	33%	33%	33%	33%	35%	32%	33%	52%

**Table 14 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3-8	10
Irving MS	--	--	--	5%	4%	8%	6%	--
Timilty MS	--	--	--	0%	6%	5%	4%	--
Brighton High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2%
Boston International High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	10%
Charlestown High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	11%
Community Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Excel High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7%
Burke High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	10%
East Boston High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	17%
The English High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	15%
Madison Park Tech/Voc High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5%
Fenway High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	23%
Another Course to College	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	16%
New Mission High	--	--	--	--	8%	5%	6%	36%
Egleston Community High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin Acad	--	--	--	--	66%	39%	52%	89%
Boston Arts Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	23%
Boston Adult Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Margarita Muniz Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5%
Boston Leadership Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	17%
Boston Latin School	--	--	--	--	83%	66%	74%	98%
Quincy Upper School	--	--	--	39%	17%	6%	25%	16%
O'Bryant Math & Science	--	--	--	--	67%	72%	69%	84%
Community Sci/Health Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7%
Lyon Upper 9-12	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	13%
Umana Academy	2%	2%	2%	3%	9%	11%	7%	--
TechBoston Academy	--	--	--	3%	2%	6%	4%	16%
Snowden International School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	9%
Hernandez K - 8	18%	3%	6%	17%	8%	13%	10%	--
Horace Mann School for the Deaf	--	--	--	--	--	--	0%	--
Boston Collaborative High								
District	20%	17%	19%	19%	24%	21%	20%	38%
State	33%	33%	33%	33%	35%	32%	33%	52%

**Table 15: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Science Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	5	8	5 and 8	10
Lee Academy EES	--	--	--	--
Baldwin ELC	--	--	--	--
Lyon K - 8	36%	15%	26%	--
ELC/West	--	--	--	--
Ellison/Parks EES	--	--	--	--
East Boston EEC	--	--	--	--
Haynes EEC	--	--	--	--
Boston Teachers Union School	41%	--	38%	--
Jackson/Mann ES	27%	0%	21%	--
Shaw ES	--	--	--	--
Higginson	--	--	--	--
Mattahunt	--	--	--	--
Curley K - 8	33%	2%	21%	--
Beethoven ES	--	--	--	--
Carter School	--	--	--	--
Sumner ES	16%	--	16%	--
Taylor ES	9%	--	9%	--
Guild ES	6%	--	6%	--
Alighieri Dante Montessori School	--	--	--	--
Ellis ES	8%	--	8%	--
Dearborn STEM Academy	--	7%	7%	--
Haley ES	24%	17%	21%	--
McKay K - 8	9%	14%	11%	--
Everett ES	3%	--	3%	--
Eliot ES	66%	12%	51%	--
Mendell ES	37%	--	37%	--
Roosevelt ES	20%	--	16%	--
Conley ES	14%	--	14%	--
Grew ES	18%	--	18%	--
Holmes ES	9%	--	9%	--
O'Donnell ES	7%	--	7%	--
Condon ES	10%	8%	10%	--
Hennigan ES	4%	0%	2%	--
Chittick ES	21%	--	21%	--
Otis ES	26%	--	26%	--
J. F. Kennedy ES	23%	--	23%	--
UP Academy Holland	6%	--	6%	--
Philbrick ES	19%	--	19%	--
McCormack MS	--	0%	0%	--
Winthrop ES	10%	--	10%	--
Tynan ES	4%	--	4%	--
District	20%	16%	19%	--
State	42%	41%	42%	--

**NOTE:** Grade 10 results for spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about CD requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>.

**Table 15 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Science Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	5	8	5 and 8	10
Hurley ES	33%	6%	24%	--
Lee ES	16%	6%	12%	--
Manning ES	47%	--	47%	--
Kilmer ES	31%	19%	27%	--
Harvard/Kent ES	19%	--	19%	--
Bradley ES	39%	--	39%	--
Mather ES	10%	--	10%	--
Tobin K - 8	2%	0%	2%	--
Perkins ES	14%	--	14%	--
Mozart ES	43%	--	43%	--
Murphy K - 8	41%	21%	35%	--
Hale ES	39%	--	39%	--
Perry ES	11%	--	12%	--
Orchard Gardens K - 8	4%	7%	5%	--
Ohrenberger ES	30%	11%	24%	--
Lyndon K - 8	52%	--	49%	--
P. Kennedy ES	6%	--	6%	--
William Henderson Lower	--	--	--	--
Dever ES	5%	--	5%	--
Bates ES	11%	--	11%	--
Quincy ES	42%	--	42%	--
Clap ES	--	--	--	--
Adams ES	25%	--	25%	--
Mason ES	17%	--	17%	--
S. Greenwood K - 8	3%	0%	2%	--
Gardner ES	21%	10%	16%	--
Kenny ES	18%	--	18%	--
Warren/Prescott K - 8	37%	19%	32%	--
Channing ES	28%	--	28%	--
McKinley Schools	0%	--	0%	--
Russell ES	17%	--	17%	--
Trotter ES	8%	0%	6%	--
Winship ES	33%	--	33%	--
Edison K-8	4%	7%	6%	--
King K-8	10%	40%	16%	--
Higginson/Lewis K-8	6%	0%	2%	--
Mildred Avenue K-8	11%	4%	8%	--
Young Achievers K - 8	5%	10%	6%	--
Mission Hill K - 8	19%	25%	21%	--
Frederick MS	--	4%	4%	--
Blackstone ES	7%	--	7%	--
District	20%	16%	19%	--
State	42%	41%	42%	--

**NOTE:** Grade 10 results for spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about CD requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>.

**Table 15 Continued: Boston Public Schools**  
**Next-Generation MCAS Science Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021**

School	5	8	5 and 8	10
William Henderson Upper	34%	9%	23%	--
Edwards MS	--	7%	7%	--
Irving MS	--	7%	7%	--
Timilty MS	--	9%	9%	--
Brighton High	--	--	--	--
Boston International High	--	--	--	--
Charlestown High	--	--	--	--
Community Academy	--	--	--	--
Excel High	--	--	--	--
Burke High	--	--	--	--
East Boston High	--	--	--	--
The English High	--	--	--	--
Madison Park Tech/Voc High	--	--	--	--
Fenway High	--	--	--	--
Another Course to College	--	--	--	--
New Mission High	--	4%	4%	--
Egleston Community High	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin Acad	--	44%	44%	--
Boston Arts Academy	--	--	--	--
Boston Adult Academy	--	--	--	--
Margarita Muniz Academy	--	--	--	--
Boston Leadership Acad	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin School	--	67%	67%	--
Quincy Upper School	--	6%	6%	--
O'Bryant Math & Science	--	37%	37%	--
Community Sci/Health Acad	--	--	--	--
Lyon Upper 9-12	--	--	--	--
Umana Academy	4%	9%	7%	--
TechBoston Academy	--	10%	10%	--
Snowden International School	--	--	--	--
Hernandez K - 8	17%	27%	20%	--
Horace Mann School for the Deaf	--	--	0%	--
Boston Collaborative High	--	--	--	--
District	20%	16%	19%	--
State	42%	41%	42%	--

**NOTE:** Grade 10 results for spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about CD requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>.

**Table 16: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Lee Academy EES	33%	29%	33%	--	--	30%	--	--	--	--
Baldwin ELC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lyon K - 8	20%	19%	16%	7%	24%	22%	--	10%	--	25%
ELC/West	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ellison/Parks EES	27%	27%	29%	--	25%	30%	--	20%	--	--
East Boston EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Haynes EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Teachers Union School	56%	35%	30%	37%	27%	24%	--	41%	--	80%
Jackson/Mann ES	25%	22%	22%	1%	20%	18%	66%	11%	--	32%
Shaw ES	10%	10%	10%	--	--	15%	--	--	--	--
Higginson	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mattahunt	25%	25%	25%	8%	25%	23%	--	21%	--	--
Curley K - 8	36%	18%	15%	9%	17%	14%	--	19%	73%	82%
Beethoven ES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Carter School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sumner ES	33%	26%	25%	12%	25%	21%	--	27%	70%	60%
Taylor ES	24%	24%	21%	6%	19%	23%	--	23%	--	--
Guild ES	21%	18%	22%	12%	12%	--	--	20%	--	28%
Alighieri Dante Montessori School	52%	46%	42%	--	42%	--	--	48%	--	75%
Ellis ES	19%	18%	18%	4%	16%	24%	--	17%	--	--
Dearborn STEM Academy	16%	12%	13%	8%	6%	15%	--	18%	--	--
Haley ES	34%	23%	17%	17%	22%	24%	--	25%	60%	68%
McKay K - 8	20%	17%	17%	5%	15%	--	--	19%	40%	21%
Everett ES	34%	35%	33%	15%	33%	23%	55%	36%	--	--
Eliot ES	73%	50%	45%	43%	50%	25%	75%	45%	85%	83%
Mendell ES	50%	29%	27%	10%	28%	32%	--	28%	--	92%
Roosevelt ES	19%	17%	19%	7%	19%	20%	60%	14%	20%	13%
Conley ES	26%	17%	16%	7%	16%	14%	--	26%	--	77%
Grew ES	41%	37%	39%	40%	29%	38%	--	40%	--	--
Holmes ES	21%	18%	17%	16%	16%	25%	--	9%	--	--
O'Donnell ES	19%	18%	16%	17%	19%	--	--	19%	--	--
Condon ES	21%	17%	16%	5%	14%	14%	36%	16%	26%	36%
Hennigan ES	19%	17%	18%	5%	13%	22%	--	19%	--	10%
Chittick ES	36%	34%	34%	10%	33%	32%	--	46%	--	--
Otis ES	35%	32%	32%	11%	28%	50%	--	30%	--	41%
J. F. Kennedy ES	35%	29%	27%	20%	27%	39%	--	27%	--	69%
UP Academy Holland	15%	14%	13%	0%	12%	20%	25%	8%	--	--
Philbrick ES	41%	36%	38%	--	36%	32%	--	36%	--	--
District	31%	23%	21%	11%	22%	21%	55%	22%	47%	60%
State	46%	28%	27%	16%	24%	28%	66%	26%	51%	54%



**Table 16 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
McCormack MS	10%	8%	7%	0%	5%	7%	23%	9%	--	--
Winthrop ES	16%	15%	16%	0%	17%	15%	--	14%	--	--
Tynan ES	24%	22%	23%	9%	21%	12%	--	29%	--	27%
Hurley ES	39%	31%	29%	12%	29%	--	--	28%	--	76%
Lee ES	19%	16%	16%	4%	19%	18%	27%	21%	20%	12%
Manning ES	70%	51%	33%	38%	59%	17%	--	62%	--	84%
Kilmer ES	47%	27%	22%	13%	24%	22%	86%	30%	77%	53%
Harvard/Kent ES	35%	33%	35%	26%	32%	32%	43%	30%	--	42%
Bradley ES	63%	56%	59%	34%	52%	80%	86%	52%	--	66%
Mather ES	28%	25%	23%	10%	29%	29%	39%	14%	--	--
Tobin K - 8	14%	14%	13%	3%	13%	8%	--	16%	--	--
Perkins ES	33%	29%	29%	25%	25%	30%	--	24%	--	43%
Mozart ES	47%	28%	30%	24%	11%	36%	--	47%	--	68%
Murphy K - 8	47%	40%	35%	14%	41%	31%	56%	25%	52%	72%
Hale ES	63%	55%	54%	30%	58%	54%	--	58%	--	--
Perry ES	30%	20%	24%	6%	14%	30%	--	6%	--	38%
Orchard Gardens K - 8	12%	11%	12%	7%	8%	9%	--	16%	--	--
Ohrenberger ES	35%	26%	23%	24%	19%	22%	63%	28%	45%	57%
Lyndon K - 8	55%	35%	31%	16%	32%	32%	--	35%	82%	68%
P. Kennedy ES	30%	29%	26%	16%	29%	--	--	29%	--	--
William Henderson Lower	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dever ES	23%	22%	20%	12%	22%	20%	90%	19%	--	--
Bates ES	33%	21%	17%	17%	13%	38%	--	11%	--	63%
Quincy ES	46%	42%	39%	15%	44%	32%	47%	27%	--	67%
Clap ES	34%	35%	34%	25%	33%	38%	--	--	--	--
Adams ES	28%	25%	17%	7%	25%	--	--	25%	--	44%
Mason ES	22%	16%	16%	15%	7%	24%	--	18%	--	--
S. Greenwood K - 8	11%	10%	11%	2%	10%	6%	--	12%	--	--
Gardner ES	29%	25%	22%	11%	26%	30%	64%	24%	--	32%
Kenny ES	33%	25%	24%	5%	25%	27%	47%	25%	--	50%
Warren/Prescott K - 8	55%	40%	42%	20%	43%	36%	70%	38%	63%	68%
Channing ES	31%	26%	24%	23%	29%	21%	--	37%	--	--
McKinley Schools	9%	9%	7%	9%	0%	7%	--	8%	--	--
Russell ES	31%	30%	26%	0%	31%	22%	73%	26%	--	--
Trotter ES	12%	12%	12%	7%	12%	16%	--	7%	--	--
Winship ES	60%	50%	47%	--	39%	60%	--	42%	--	77%
Edison K-8	20%	18%	16%	10%	17%	10%	37%	16%	10%	34%
King K-8	22%	20%	20%	6%	16%	25%	--	15%	10%	--
District	31%	23%	21%	11%	22%	21%	55%	22%	47%	60%
State	46%	28%	27%	16%	24%	28%	66%	26%	51%	54%

**Table 16 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Higginson/Lewis K-8	6%	6%	6%	1%	7%	4%	--	7%	9%	--
Mildred Avenue K-8	17%	14%	14%	3%	10%	17%	--	13%	46%	18%
Young Achievers K - 8	13%	11%	11%	3%	13%	12%	--	13%	--	--
Mission Hill K - 8	36%	18%	19%	10%	10%	13%	--	22%	--	78%
Frederick MS	6%	6%	6%	2%	6%	3%	15%	6%	--	--
Blackstone ES	14%	12%	8%	5%	12%	14%	--	13%	--	--
William Henderson Upper	31%	24%	24%	11%	33%	19%	61%	25%	55%	43%
Edwards MS	9%	9%	7%	5%	7%	9%	--	10%	--	6%
Irving MS	9%	8%	7%	3%	7%	8%	--	13%	--	--
Timilty MS	13%	13%	13%	11%	7%	15%	--	11%	--	--
Brighton High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston International High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Charlestown High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Community Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Excel High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Burke High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
East Boston High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
The English High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Madison Park Tech/Voc High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Fenway High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Another Course to College	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
New Mission High	21%	17%	16%	14%	7%	21%	--	16%	--	--
Egleston Community High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin Acad	69%	66%	67%	57%	64%	74%	63%	75%	80%	62%
Boston Arts Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Adult Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Margarita Muniz Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Leadership Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin School	83%	81%	78%	86%	79%	84%	84%	83%	86%	81%
Quincy Upper School	26%	24%	21%	2%	27%	15%	32%	12%	--	40%
O'Bryant Math & Science	68%	67%	68%	63%	63%	75%	68%	68%	--	60%
Community Sci/Health Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lyon Upper 9-12	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Umana Academy	19%	18%	18%	3%	16%	--	50%	18%	--	19%
TechBoston Academy	7%	8%	9%	4%	8%	6%	--	11%	0%	--
Snowden International School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hernandez K - 8	22%	14%	15%	--	12%	--	--	19%	--	--
Horace Mann School for the Deaf	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	--	0%	--	--
Boston Collaborative High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
District	31%	23%	21%	11%	22%	21%	55%	22%	47%	60%
State	46%	28%	27%	16%	24%	28%	66%	26%	51%	54%

**Table 17: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Lee Academy EES	18%	11%	13%	--	--	--	--	18%	--	--
Baldwin ELC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lyon K - 8	14%	13%	10%	7%	18%	9%	--	5%	--	17%
ELC/West	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ellison/Parks EES	3%	3%	4%	--	4%	5%	--	0%	--	--
East Boston EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Haynes EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Teachers Union School	47%	22%	14%	26%	30%	17%	--	26%	--	71%
Jackson/Mann ES	13%	9%	9%	1%	9%	6%	55%	1%	--	24%
Shaw ES	0%	0%	0%	--	--	0%	--	--	--	--
Higginson	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mattahunt	9%	6%	4%	4%	8%	4%	--	17%	--	--
Curley K - 8	23%	8%	7%	3%	7%	8%	--	8%	48%	67%
Beethoven ES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Carter School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sumner ES	17%	9%	9%	0%	9%	3%	--	11%	40%	53%
Taylor ES	9%	9%	6%	0%	13%	8%	--	9%	--	--
Guild ES	13%	10%	12%	5%	8%	--	--	12%	--	17%
Alighieri Dante Montessori School	33%	21%	26%	--	21%	--	--	24%	--	58%
Ellis ES	6%	5%	5%	5%	9%	4%	--	8%	--	--
Dearborn STEM Academy	6%	5%	5%	2%	3%	5%	--	6%	10%	--
Haley ES	10%	5%	3%	3%	6%	3%	--	7%	19%	28%
McKay K - 8	8%	7%	7%	1%	7%	--	--	8%	0%	6%
Everett ES	10%	9%	6%	3%	16%	7%	25%	8%	--	--
Eliot ES	66%	47%	38%	41%	55%	25%	82%	37%	81%	73%
Mendell ES	29%	7%	6%	0%	8%	10%	--	10%	--	69%
Roosevelt ES	9%	7%	5%	2%	10%	6%	60%	5%	10%	13%
Conley ES	8%	4%	5%	5%	3%	0%	--	10%	--	31%
Grew ES	19%	19%	19%	0%	21%	13%	--	21%	--	--
Holmes ES	8%	6%	5%	2%	10%	7%	--	3%	--	--
O'Donnell ES	11%	11%	10%	18%	11%	--	--	9%	--	--
Condon ES	11%	8%	7%	3%	7%	4%	45%	5%	30%	18%
Hennigan ES	7%	7%	7%	3%	6%	7%	--	7%	--	0%
Chittick ES	11%	11%	11%	0%	8%	13%	--	8%	--	--
Otis ES	21%	18%	19%	3%	16%	17%	--	17%	--	34%
J. F. Kennedy ES	12%	10%	9%	8%	9%	15%	--	7%	--	38%
UP Academy Holland	4%	4%	4%	0%	3%	7%	9%	1%	--	--
Philbrick ES	18%	16%	16%	--	7%	14%	--	7%	--	--
District	20%	13%	11%	6%	14%	9%	54%	10%	31%	45%
State	33%	16%	14%	10%	17%	14%	64%	14%	37%	40%

**Table 17 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
McCormack MS	6%	6%	5%	0%	8%	7%	7%	5%	--	--
Winthrop ES	5%	5%	5%	0%	0%	2%	--	4%	--	--
Tynan ES	8%	7%	7%	0%	4%	6%	--	7%	--	6%
Hurley ES	14%	7%	3%	3%	8%	--	--	6%	--	52%
Lee ES	6%	5%	4%	3%	8%	5%	27%	4%	5%	12%
Manning ES	40%	24%	15%	15%	29%	8%	--	24%	--	55%
Kilmer ES	33%	24%	21%	12%	32%	11%	77%	16%	46%	40%
Harvard/Kent ES	29%	28%	28%	18%	33%	17%	53%	23%	--	29%
Bradley ES	42%	35%	34%	11%	32%	20%	100%	31%	--	43%
Mather ES	11%	10%	8%	4%	14%	7%	23%	2%	--	--
Tobin K - 8	5%	5%	4%	6%	6%	1%	--	6%	--	--
Perkins ES	11%	8%	6%	0%	13%	8%	--	8%	--	7%
Mozart ES	36%	10%	15%	10%	6%	18%	--	33%	--	63%
Murphy K - 8	36%	32%	26%	10%	37%	17%	52%	12%	32%	40%
Hale ES	33%	24%	23%	0%	43%	21%	--	22%	--	--
Perry ES	18%	8%	10%	0%	5%	5%	--	12%	--	28%
Orchard Gardens K - 8	4%	4%	5%	0%	5%	3%	--	7%	--	--
Ohrenberger ES	27%	17%	14%	14%	13%	20%	81%	15%	30%	45%
Lyndon K - 8	32%	16%	11%	8%	15%	7%	--	10%	35%	48%
P. Kennedy ES	12%	12%	10%	8%	13%	--	--	10%	--	--
William Henderson Lower	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dever ES	12%	12%	12%	3%	14%	9%	50%	10%	--	--
Bates ES	24%	15%	10%	17%	7%	25%	--	8%	--	47%
Quincy ES	47%	46%	46%	17%	50%	12%	54%	20%	--	57%
Clap ES	17%	18%	14%	17%	7%	13%	--	--	--	--
Adams ES	18%	16%	9%	4%	18%	--	--	15%	--	33%
Mason ES	8%	6%	6%	6%	0%	7%	--	11%	--	--
S. Greenwood K - 8	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	--	3%	--	--
Gardner ES	15%	12%	13%	5%	10%	8%	64%	9%	--	32%
Kenny ES	17%	10%	9%	3%	8%	14%	32%	6%	--	29%
Warren/Prescott K - 8	38%	22%	22%	7%	20%	14%	60%	23%	56%	51%
Channing ES	9%	8%	9%	0%	11%	2%	--	13%	--	--
McKinley Schools	3%	3%	2%	3%	0%	0%	--	4%	--	--
Russell ES	19%	18%	12%	8%	21%	7%	45%	20%	--	--
Trotter ES	8%	7%	7%	0%	5%	12%	--	4%	--	--
Winship ES	43%	27%	21%	--	25%	30%	--	17%	--	77%
Edison K-8	10%	9%	8%	6%	8%	2%	39%	5%	10%	14%
King K-8	11%	10%	10%	6%	9%	13%	--	7%	--	--
District	20%	13%	11%	6%	14%	9%	54%	10%	31%	45%
State	33%	16%	14%	10%	17%	14%	64%	14%	37%	40%

**Table 17 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Higginson/Lewis K-8	5%	4%	4%	0%	4%	6%	--	4%	0%	--
Mildred Avenue K-8	4%	3%	3%	1%	4%	3%	--	4%	15%	9%
Young Achievers K - 8	6%	4%	3%	0%	4%	7%	--	3%	--	--
Mission Hill K - 8	20%	5%	3%	5%	0%	3%	--	7%	--	53%
Frederick MS	6%	6%	5%	1%	8%	3%	24%	2%	--	--
Blackstone ES	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	--	2%	--	--
William Henderson Upper	21%	17%	15%	12%	27%	11%	58%	13%	36%	30%
Edwards MS	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	--	5%	--	0%
Irving MS	6%	5%	4%	1%	7%	5%	--	6%	--	--
Timilty MS	4%	4%	4%	2%	3%	4%	--	1%	--	--
Brighton High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston International High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Charlestown High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Community Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Excel High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Burke High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
East Boston High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
The English High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Madison Park Tech/Voc High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Fenway High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Another Course to College	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
New Mission High	6%	3%	2%	7%	3%	7%	--	3%	--	--
Egleston Community High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin Acad	52%	58%	55%	59%	66%	41%	71%	53%	62%	47%
Boston Arts Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Adult Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Margarita Muniz Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Leadership Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin School	74%	76%	75%	64%	81%	75%	85%	70%	75%	68%
Quincy Upper School	25%	24%	23%	2%	30%	4%	35%	9%	--	36%
O'Bryant Math & Science	69%	70%	69%	56%	78%	64%	84%	66%	--	64%
Community Sci/Health Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lyon Upper 9-12	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Umana Academy	7%	6%	5%	1%	5%	--	40%	6%	--	3%
TechBoston Academy	4%	4%	4%	3%	6%	2%	--	7%	7%	--
Snowden International School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hernandez K - 8	10%	5%	5%	--	6%	--	--	7%	--	--
Horace Mann School for the Deaf	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	--	0%	--	--
Boston Collaborative School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
District	20%	13%	11%	6%	14%	9%	54%	10%	31%	45%
State	33%	16%	14%	10%	17%	14%	64%	14%	37%	40%

**Table 18: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grade 10, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Carter School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dearborn STEM Academy	22%	19%	22%	10%	11%	16%	--	32%	--	--
McKinley Schools	5%	5%	0%	5%	--	--	--	0%	--	--
William Henderson Upper	28%	27%	26%	27%	15%	25%	--	44%	--	30%
Brighton High	7%	5%	6%	5%	0%	5%	--	11%	--	--
Boston International High	3%	3%	0%	--	3%	9%	--	0%	--	--
Charlestown High	19%	17%	19%	3%	10%	7%	--	21%	--	--
Community Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Excel High	7%	3%	3%	6%	0%	--	--	4%	--	--
Burke High	14%	11%	13%	5%	9%	10%	--	19%	--	--
East Boston High	28%	28%	27%	20%	20%	10%	--	29%	--	33%
The English High	18%	15%	14%	--	6%	25%	--	11%	--	--
Madison Park Tech/Voc High	15%	14%	14%	9%	7%	12%	--	16%	--	40%
Fenway High	42%	38%	35%	13%	28%	37%	--	43%	--	--
Another Course to College	30%	23%	24%	9%	--	25%	--	40%	--	--
New Mission High	40%	40%	45%	--	40%	35%	--	46%	--	--
Egleston Community High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin Acad	88%	84%	86%	--	79%	92%	81%	82%	--	91%
Boston Arts Academy	44%	33%	33%	19%	20%	34%	--	47%	--	--
Boston Adult Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Margarita Muniz Academy	23%	24%	22%	23%	20%	--	--	23%	--	--
Boston Leadership Acad	36%	33%	34%	--	23%	32%	--	39%	--	--
Boston Latin School	96%	98%	98%	--	--	95%	99%	94%	91%	95%
Quincy Upper School	16%	14%	17%	--	9%	--	30%	0%	--	--
O'Bryant Math & Science	88%	86%	88%	85%	70%	95%	86%	89%	--	73%
Community Sci/Health Acad	18%	19%	20%	10%	19%	18%	--	17%	--	--
Lyon Upper 9-12	35%	33%	33%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TechBoston Academy	24%	21%	23%	20%	9%	16%	--	38%	--	--
Snowden International School	30%	27%	29%	9%	20%	25%	--	34%	--	--
Horace Mann School for the Deaf	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Collaborative High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
District	45%	34%	34%	15%	20%	34%	72%	37%	60%	74%
State	64%	39%	41%	25%	19%	41%	80%	39%	67%	73%

**Table 19: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grade 10, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Carter School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dearborn STEM Academy	10%	12%	15%	10%	7%	9%	--	10%	--	--
McKinley Schools	0%	0%	0%	0%	--	--	--	--	--	--
William Henderson Upper	19%	20%	21%	20%	15%	11%	--	33%	--	10%
Brighton High	2%	3%	3%	6%	0%	6%	--	0%	--	--
Boston International High	10%	10%	14%	--	10%	20%	--	0%	--	--
Charlestown High	11%	9%	8%	0%	8%	8%	--	6%	--	--
Community Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Excel High	7%	6%	6%	0%	5%	--	--	10%	--	--
Burke High	10%	9%	11%	5%	9%	7%	--	14%	--	--
East Boston High	17%	16%	14%	13%	13%	10%	--	18%	--	21%
The English High	15%	13%	11%	--	6%	13%	--	15%	--	--
Madison Park Tech/Voc High	5%	5%	4%	4%	7%	3%	--	6%	--	10%
Fenway High	23%	19%	20%	8%	10%	22%	--	19%	--	--
Another Course to College	16%	15%	14%	0%	--	12%	--	19%	--	--
New Mission High	36%	37%	43%	--	--	24%	--	50%	--	--
Egleston Community High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin Acad	89%	88%	91%	--	94%	86%	95%	92%	--	86%
Boston Arts Academy	23%	17%	19%	9%	5%	15%	--	23%	--	--
Boston Adult Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Margarita Muniz Academy	5%	5%	6%	0%	2%	--	--	5%	--	--
Boston Leadership Acad	17%	16%	15%	--	12%	13%	--	17%	--	--
Boston Latin School	98%	100%	100%	--	--	100%	100%	97%	100%	96%
Quincy Upper School	16%	14%	13%	--	18%	--	40%	0%	--	--
O'Bryant Math & Science	84%	84%	84%	85%	86%	88%	96%	76%	--	75%
Community Sci/Health Acad	7%	8%	8%	0%	0%	10%	--	0%	--	--
Lyon Upper 9-12	13%	17%	13%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TechBoston Academy	16%	15%	18%	10%	13%	10%	--	19%	--	--
Snowden International School	9%	8%	7%	0%	6%	3%	--	11%	--	--
Horace Mann School for the Deaf	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Collaborative High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
District	38%	26%	26%	11%	16%	27%	81%	26%	53%	68%
State	52%	26%	27%	14%	15%	27%	80%	26%	55%	60%

**Table 20: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Science Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 5-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Lee Academy EES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Baldwin ELC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lyon K - 8	26%	24%	12%	33%	--	--	--	--	--	40%
ELC/West	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ellison/Parks EES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
East Boston EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Haynes EEC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Teachers Union School	38%	22%	13%	--	--	--	--	20%	--	--
Jackson/Mann ES	21%	15%	13%	5%	13%	13%	45%	12%	--	--
Shaw ES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Higginson	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mattahunt	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Curley K - 8	21%	9%	9%	8%	9%	8%	--	11%	--	71%
Beethoven ES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Carter School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sumner ES	16%	7%	8%	5%	6%	12%	--	8%	--	60%
Taylor ES	9%	7%	8%	15%	3%	5%	--	17%	--	--
Guild ES	6%	7%	5%	0%	8%	--	--	8%	--	--
Alighieri Dante Montessori School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ellis ES	8%	8%	9%	--	7%	6%	--	9%	--	--
Dearborn STEM Academy	7%	5%	6%	--	0%	7%	--	8%	--	--
Haley ES	21%	15%	17%	10%	17%	15%	0%	19%	--	--
McKay K - 8	11%	12%	10%	3%	15%	--	--	13%	--	--
Everett ES	3%	4%	5%	--	--	6%	--	0%	--	--
Eliot ES	51%	21%	24%	16%	11%	--	30%	33%	70%	58%
Mendell ES	37%	9%	10%	10%	--	--	--	33%	--	75%
Roosevelt ES	16%	15%	21%	0%	6%	9%	--	6%	--	--
Conley ES	14%	3%	0%	6%	0%	16%	--	0%	--	--
Grew ES	18%	13%	14%	--	--	--	--	13%	--	--
Holmes ES	9%	9%	3%	11%	0%	5%	--	--	--	--
O'Donnell ES	7%	7%	7%	--	4%	--	--	7%	--	--
Condon ES	10%	8%	8%	3%	6%	8%	--	5%	--	10%
Hennigan ES	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	--	2%	--	--
Chittick ES	21%	20%	19%	--	--	14%	--	--	--	--
Otis ES	26%	22%	23%	33%	15%	--	--	25%	--	30%
J. F. Kennedy ES	23%	15%	14%	13%	13%	20%	--	17%	--	--
UP Academy Holland	6%	6%	7%	0%	3%	7%	--	3%	--	--
Philbrick ES	19%	0%	0%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
McCormack MS	0%	0%	0%	--	0%	--	--	0%	--	--
District	19%	12%	11%	6%	11%	10%	38%	11%	39%	45%
State	42%	23%	21%	15%	18%	19%	62%	20%	47%	50%



**Table 20 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Science Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 5-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Winthrop ES	10%	10%	11%	--	--	8%	--	--	--	--
Tynan ES	4%	4%	5%	0%	--	0%	--	--	--	--
Hurley ES	24%	14%	9%	0%	16%	--	--	13%	--	--
Lee ES	12%	10%	12%	6%	19%	11%	--	19%	--	--
Manning ES	47%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Kilmer ES	27%	15%	22%	0%	7%	30%	--	8%	--	33%
Harvard/Kent ES	19%	17%	19%	7%	17%	19%	36%	6%	--	--
Bradley ES	39%	31%	22%	--	35%	--	--	25%	--	55%
Mather ES	10%	9%	7%	0%	7%	11%	13%	8%	--	--
Tobin K - 8	2%	2%	2%	--	4%	0%	--	3%	--	--
Perkins ES	14%	12%	13%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mozart ES	43%	17%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Murphy K - 8	35%	28%	27%	9%	28%	15%	45%	21%	--	53%
Hale ES	39%	29%	33%	--	40%	33%	--	--	--	--
Perry ES	12%	6%	6%	0%	--	--	--	--	--	20%
Orchard Gardens K - 8	5%	5%	6%	0%	3%	2%	--	7%	--	--
Ohrenberger ES	24%	13%	13%	10%	6%	18%	--	12%	--	40%
Lyndon K - 8	49%	29%	25%	27%	21%	--	--	10%	--	65%
P. Kennedy ES	6%	3%	4%	--	4%	--	--	3%	--	--
William Henderson Lower	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dever ES	5%	6%	4%	--	9%	0%	--	6%	--	--
Bates ES	11%	4%	0%	10%	0%	--	--	0%	--	--
Quincy ES	42%	38%	38%	17%	40%	20%	43%	9%	--	--
Clap ES	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Adams ES	25%	19%	18%	--	20%	--	--	26%	--	--
Mason ES	17%	17%	20%	--	--	7%	--	--	--	--
S. Greenwood K - 8	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%	9%	--	0%	--	--
Gardner ES	16%	11%	9%	0%	11%	--	--	5%	--	--
Kenny ES	18%	16%	17%	0%	0%	19%	--	17%	--	--
Warren/Prescott K - 8	32%	20%	23%	9%	8%	8%	--	19%	--	48%
Channing ES	28%	33%	20%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
McKinley Schools	0%	0%	0%	0%	--	0%	--	0%	--	--
Russell ES	17%	18%	18%	--	21%	8%	--	16%	--	--
Trotter ES	6%	4%	5%	0%	--	4%	--	8%	--	--
Winship ES	33%	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Edison K-8	6%	6%	5%	9%	4%	0%	8%	6%	--	--
King K-8	16%	15%	15%	0%	11%	17%	--	15%	33%	0%
Higginson/Lewis K-8	2%	3%	3%	0%	0%	5%	--	0%	--	--
Mildred Avenue K-8	8%	8%	8%	0%	3%	6%	--	11%	--	--
District	19%	12%	11%	6%	11%	10%	38%	11%	39%	45%
State	42%	23%	21%	15%	18%	19%	62%	20%	47%	50%

**Table 20 Continued: Boston Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Science Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 5-8 by School, 2021**

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL and Former EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Young Achievers K - 8	6%	4%	4%	0%	6%	7%	--	5%	--	--
Mission Hill K - 8	21%	0%	0%	0%	--	--	--	7%	--	--
Frederick MS	4%	5%	5%	0%	7%	3%	--	5%	--	--
Blackstone ES	7%	0%	--	--	--	--	--	10%	--	--
William Henderson Upper	23%	17%	18%	6%	29%	7%	--	13%	--	38%
Edwards MS	7%	7%	5%	6%	7%	--	--	9%	--	--
Irving MS	7%	7%	6%	0%	6%	0%	--	12%	--	--
Timilty MS	9%	8%	9%	0%	12%	0%	--	13%	--	--
Brighton High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston International High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Charlestown High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Community Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Excel High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Burke High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
East Boston High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
The English High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Madison Park Tech/Voc High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Fenway High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Another Course to College	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
New Mission High	4%	5%	7%	--	--	0%	--	0%	--	--
Egleston Community High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin Acad	44%	41%	40%	--	--	44%	60%	38%	--	38%
Boston Arts Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Adult Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Margarita Muniz Academy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Leadership Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Latin School	67%	73%	65%	--	--	89%	63%	62%	--	66%
Quincy Upper School	6%	7%	5%	--	6%	--	8%	7%	--	--
O'Bryant Math & Science	37%	39%	43%	--	50%	37%	--	30%	--	--
Community Sci/Health Acad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lyon Upper 9-12	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Umana Academy	7%	6%	7%	0%	7%	--	--	7%	--	--
TechBoston Academy	10%	9%	8%	--	5%	10%	--	7%	--	--
Snowden International School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hernandez K - 8	20%	10%	11%	--	9%	--	--	15%	--	--
Horace Mann School for the Deaf	0%	0%	--	0%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boston Collaborative High	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
District	19%	12%	11%	6%	11%	10%	38%	11%	39%	45%
State	42%	23%	21%	15%	18%	19%	62%	20%	47%	50%

**Table 21: Boston Public Schools  
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021**

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-yr Change	State (2021)
All	3,867	75.1	73.2	75.4	78.8	3.7	89.8
African American/Black	1,235	76.4	71.9	74.6	77.7	1.3	84.4
Asian	429	93.0	91.5	91.9	93.2	0.2	96.1
Hispanic/Latino	1,632	67.6	67.0	69.8	73.7	6.1	80.0
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	75	71.8	83.6	76.0	78.7	6.9	88.8
White	476	80.6	81.9	83.9	86.8	6.2	93.2
High Needs	3,138	70.2	68.6	71.5	74.8	4.6	82.4
Low Income	2,980	71.3	69.6	72.6	75.1	3.8	81.7
EL	1,155	63.6	63.2	65.2	68.1	4.5	71.8
SWD	718	54.5	54.0	53.4	61.4	6.9	76.6

**Table 22: Boston Public Schools  
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2017-2020**

Group	N (2020)	2017	2018	2019	2020	4-yr Change	State (2020)
All	3,923	78.6	80.0	80.0	81.4	2.8	91.0
African American/Black	1,381	76.2	81.3	79.7	81.2	5.0	87.2
Asian	393	94.7	94.0	94.3	94.7	0.0	95.8
Hispanic/ Latino	1,602	74.7	74.3	75.1	76.4	1.7	81.0
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	96	79.0	76.9	84.9	83.3	4.3	90.8
White	440	84.4	83.0	85.8	87.3	2.9	94.4
High Needs	3,229	76.1	76.1	76.6	78.3	2.2	84.5
Low Income	2,881	76.6	77.1	76.8	79.2	2.6	84.1
EL	1,300	69.5	71.6	73.8	73.4	3.9	74.7
SWD	754	60.1	61.1	64.3	64.5	4.4	79.3

**Table 23: Boston Public Schools  
In-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021**

Group	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-yr Change	State (2021)
All	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.0	-0.3	0.3
African American/Black	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.0	-0.5	0.3
Asian	0.1	0.0	0.1	--	--	0.0
Hispanic/Latino	0.3	0.8	0.4	0.0	-0.3	0.2
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	0.8	1.0	0.3	--	--	0.4
White	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.0	-0.1	0.3
High Needs	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.0	-0.4	0.4
Economically Disadvantaged	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.0	-0.4	0.3
EL	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.0	-0.3	0.1
SWD	0.6	1.0	0.5	0.1	-0.5	0.6

**Table 24: Boston Public Schools  
Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021**

Group	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-yr Change	State (2021)
All	2.1	3.4	2.2	0.1	-2.0	0.5
African American/Black	3.3	5.3	3.3	0.2	-3.1	0.6
Asian	0.3	0.6	0.6	--	--	0.1
Hispanic/Latino	2.1	3.4	2.2	0.1	-2.0	0.5
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	1.6	3.6	2.6	--	--	0.7
White	0.7	1.2	0.8	0.1	-0.6	0.5
High Needs	2.5	3.9	2.4	0.1	-2.4	0.7
Economically Disadvantaged	2.6	4.2	2.7	0.1	-2.5	0.7
EL	1.5	2.3	1.3	0.1	-1.4	0.3
SWD	4.8	6.5	4.2	0.3	-4.5	1.1

**Table 25: Boston Public Schools  
Dropout Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021**

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-yr Change	State (2021)
All	14,342	5.4	4.2	3.9	2.0	-3.4	1.5
African American/Black	4,505	5.2	3.8	3.9	2.3	-2.9	1.8
Asian	1,494	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.3	-0.7	0.3
Hispanic/Latino	6,202	7.2	5.8	5.0	2.2	-5	3.2
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	355	3.7	3.5	4.3	2.8	-0.9	1.4
White	1,726	4.0	2.8	2.7	2.0	-2.0	1.0
High Needs	10,622	6.1	5.1	4.7	2.3	-3.8	2.7
Economically Disadvantaged	8,772	5.4	4.8	4.5	2.2	-3.2	2.9
EL	3,251	8.7	7.8	6.3	3.4	-5.3	5.8
SWD	2,734	6.3	5.1	5.0	2.3	-4	2.4

**Table 26: Boston Public Schools  
Advanced Coursework Completion\* Rates by Student Group, 2019-2021**

Group	N (2021)	2019	2020	2021	3-yr Change	State (2021)
All	7,165	60.5	57.7	61.6	1.1	65.3
African American/Black	2,348	51.3	51.4	56.4	5.1	54.9
Asian	815	85.9	85.7	89.3	3.4	84.3
Hispanic/Latino	2,963	55.2	48.5	52.0	-3.2	50.2
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	160	69.0	59.1	66.9	-2.1	65.5
White	843	80.5	77.7	82.7	2.2	69.6
High Needs	5,422	52.1	48.9	53.5	1.4	47.7
Economically Disadvantaged	4,588	53.2	49.7	53.4	0.2	49.0
EL	1,629	29.3	27.6	32.7	3.4	28.1
SWD	1,313	35.4	34.4	36.7	1.3	33.1

\*The percentage of all students enrolled in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades that complete at least one DESE-identified [advanced course](#)

**Table 27: Boston Public Schools  
Chronic Absence\* Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021**

<b>Group</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>4-yr Change</b>	<b>State (2021)</b>
All	25.5	25.2	21.1	29.4	3.9	17.7
African American/Black	26.5	26.5	22.3	34.1	7.6	24.1
Asian	10.5	10.7	8.6	10.8	0.3	7.2
Hispanic/Latino	30.9	30.5	25.8	35.2	4.3	29.0
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	24.8	25.3	20.9	27.2	2.4	18.9
White	16.2	15.4	12.6	14.8	-1.4	13.2
High Needs	28.9	28.4	24.0	33.4	4.5	26.3
Economically Disadvantaged	31.1	31.0	26.3	36.3	5.2	30.2
EL	26.8	26.7	22.1	32.7	5.9	29.0
SWD	34.6	33.1	29.1	38.9	4.3	26.8

\* The percentage of students absent 10 percent or more of their total number of student days of membership in a school

**Table 28: Boston Public Schools  
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2019-2021**

	FY19		FY20		FY21	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
<b>Expenditures</b>						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	\$1,112,248,804	\$1,126,676,079	\$1,178,564,205	\$1,178,612,348	\$1,258,683,042	\$1,260,465,246
By municipality	\$300,039,447	\$299,486,284	\$317,113,174	\$317,995,156	\$299,378,937	\$338,772,869
Total from local appropriations	\$1,412,288,252	\$1,426,162,363	\$1,495,677,379	\$1,496,607,504	\$1,558,061,979	\$1,599,238,115
From revolving funds and grants	---	\$160,107,931	---	\$138,665,105	---	\$192,307,564
Total expenditures	---	\$1,586,270,294	---	\$1,635,272,609	---	\$1,791,545,679
<b>Chapter 70 aid to education program</b>						
Chapter 70 state aid*	---	\$220,001,735	---	\$221,915,045	---	\$221,915,045
Required local contribution	---	\$711,149,680	---	\$749,907,338	---	\$762,717,504
Required net school spending**	---	\$931,151,415	---	\$971,822,383	---	\$984,632,549
Actual net school spending	---	\$1,188,862,452	---	\$1,245,231,689	---	\$1,342,785,719
Over/under required (\$)	---	\$257,711,037	---	\$273,409,306	---	\$358,153,170
Over/under required (%)	---	27.7%	---	28.1%	---	36.4%

**Table 29: Boston Public Schools  
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil Fiscal Years 2019-2021**

<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Administration	\$971.88	\$974.63	\$1,365.75
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$1,985.50	\$2,088.85	\$2,395.51
Teachers	\$8,641.23	\$9,073.95	\$9,880.83
Other teaching services	\$2,400.62	\$2,571.22	\$2,937.20
Professional development	\$147.72	\$169.82	\$272.06
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$715.01	\$767.66	\$1,016.84
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$367.83	\$383.04	\$419.85
Pupil services	\$3,161.85	\$3,372.69	\$3,684.80
Operations and maintenance	\$1,485.92	\$1,453.94	\$1,758.78
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$4,262.97	\$4,361.67	\$4,832.73
<b>Total expenditures per in-district pupil</b>	<b>\$24,140.54</b>	<b>\$25,217.49</b>	<b>\$28,564.35</b>

Sources: [Per-pupil expenditure reports on DESE website](#)

Note: Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding.

# Appendix C: Interview and Focus Group Participants

## Leadership and Governance

- District Superintendent
- Former Chief of Staff
- Chief of Equity and Strategy
- School Committee Chairperson
- School Committee Members (3)
- Chief of Schools
- Deputy Superintendent of Operations
- Elementary Superintendents Group 1 (3)
- Elementary Superintendents Group 2 (3)
- Chief of Operations
- Transformation Team (2)
- Deputy Superintendent of Academics
- Mayor's Chief of Policy/Staff
- Senior Advisor
- Chief of Human Capital
- Chief of Student Support
- Acting Director of State and Federal Accountability
- Secondary Superintendents (3)
- Boston Teacher's Union (4)

## Curriculum and Instruction

- Deputy Superintendent of Academics
- Elementary Superintendents Group 1 (3)
- Excellence for All Director
- Executive Director of Professional Learning
- Secondary Superintendents (3)
- K-8 Math Program Director
- STEM Director
- Humanities Directors (3)
- Executive Director, Office of English Learners
- Assistant Superintendent of Special Education
- Transformation Team (3)
- Assistant Superintendent of Equity
- Assistant Superintendent of Office of Opportunity Gaps
- Deputy Chief Academic Officer



- Assistant Superintendent of Academic and Professional Learning

### **Student Support**

- Assistant Superintendent of Special Education
- Supervisor for Early Childhood/Early Intervention
- Assistant Director for Region 2 Schools
- Assistant Director of Special Education for High School
- Inclusion Support Specialist Coordinator
- Director, Newcomer Assessment & Counseling Center
- Deputy Superintendent of Academics
- Interim Chief of Family and Community Advancement
- Manager of Compliance
- Assistant Director, Related Services
- Assistant Director, ABA
- Special Education Family Engagement Coordinator
- Placement Specialist
- Senior Advisor
- Chief of Equity and Strategy
- Assistant Director of Compliance
- Assistant Superintendent of Equity
- Assistant Superintendent of Office of Opportunity Gaps
- Deputy Chief Academic Officer
- Executive Director, Office of English Learners

### **Human Resources and Professional Development**

- Chief of Equity and Strategy
- Deputy Superintendent of Academics
- Elementary Superintendents Group 1 (3)
- Managing Director of the Office of Recruitment, Cultivation, and Diversity Programs
- Director of Evaluation and Performance Management
- Managing Director of Talent and Leadership Development
- Secondary Superintendents (3)
- Assistant Superintendent, Teacher Leadership and Development
- Boston Teacher's Union (2)
- Director of Retention Programs and Services for Educators of Color
- Teacher Pipeline Team (3)
- Chief of Schools
- Chief of Human Capital

- Assistant Superintendent of Academic and Professional Learning
- Administrative Professional Growth Specialist
- Staffing Managers (2)
- Interim Director of Data and Analytics, Human Capital
- Labor Relations (2)

### **Assessment**

- Chief Information Officer
- State Assessment Manager
- Executive Director of Professional Learning
- Assistant Superintendent of Academic and Professional Learning
- Director of Research
- Director of Assessment for Learning
- Senior Executive Director of Data and Accountability
- DESE Data Reporters (2)
- Director of Data Inquiry

### **Financial and Asset Management**

- District Superintendent
- Deputy Superintendent of Operations
- Deputy Chief of Operations
- City Budget Director
- Senior Data Analyst
- Deputy Chief Financial Officer
- Chief of Finance
- Director of ESSER Accountability
- Chief of Operations
- TransDev Supervisor
- Director of Transportation
- Executive Director of Facilities Management
- Budget Director
- Director of Grants and External Funding
- Business Manager
- Assistant Director of Customer Relations and School Support
- Operations and Safety (4)
- Interim Chief of Family and Community Advancement
- Director of Planning and Analysis
- Acting Director of State and Federal Accountability

- Director of Payroll
- School Operations Leaders

### **Focus Groups (All Standards)**

#### ***Principals***

- Equitable Access Principals (2)
- Elementary/Middle School Principals
- High School Principals
- Curriculum and Instruction Principals
- New Principals
- Experienced Principals

#### ***Students***

- Middle School Students
- High School Students

#### ***Teachers***

- Elementary/Middle School Teachers
- High School Teachers
- Teachers of English Learners and Students with Disabilities
- EL/ESL Teachers
- Sub-Separate Placement Teachers
- Curriculum and Instruction Teachers

#### ***Parents/Guardians, Advocacy Groups, Other***

- Coordinators of Special Education
- Language Assessment Team Facilitators
- Massachusetts Education Justice Alliance
- Boston Education Justice Alliance
- Citizens for Public Schools
- NAACP Boston Branch
- Lawyers for Civil Rights
- Elementary/Middle School Parents/Guardians
- High School Parent/Guardians
- District English Learner Advisory Committee (2)
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council

# Appendix D: Districtwide Instructional Observation Report



## *Boston Public Schools*

**Classroom Visits: Summary of Findings**

### **Districtwide Instructional Observation Report**

**March 2022**

201 Jones Road

Waltham, Massachusetts

781-373-7000 | TTY 877.334.3499

[www.air.org](http://www.air.org)



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## Introduction

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The *Districtwide Instructional Observation Report* presents ratings for the classroom observations that were conducted by certified observers at American Institutes for Research (AIR) as part of the Massachusetts District Reviews.

Observers visited Boston Public Schools during the week of March 28, 2022. The observers conducted 477 observations in a sample of classrooms across 42 schools. Observations were conducted in grades K-12 and focused primarily on literacy, English language arts, and mathematics instruction.

The classroom observations were guided by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), developed by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia. Three levels of CLASS Manuals were used: K-3, Upper Elementary, and Secondary. The K-3 tool was used to observe grades K-3, the Upper Elementary tool was used to observe grades 4-5, and the Secondary tool was used to observe grades 6-12.

The K-3 protocol includes 10 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in Table 1).

**Table 1. CLASS K-3 Domains and Dimensions**

Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
Positive Climate	Behavior Management	Concept Development
Negative Climate	Productivity	Quality of Feedback
Teacher Sensitivity	Instructional Learning Formats	Language Modeling
Regard for Student Perspectives		

The Upper Elementary and Secondary protocols include 11 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in Table 2), in addition to Student Engagement.

**Table 2. CLASS Upper Elementary and Secondary Domains and Dimensions**

Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
Positive Climate	Behavior Management	Instructional Learning Formats
Teacher Sensitivity	Productivity	Content Understanding
Regard for Student Perspectives	Negative Climate	Analysis and Inquiry
		Quality of Feedback
		Instructional Dialogue
<b>Student Engagement</b>		

When conducting a visit to a classroom, the observer rates each dimension (including Student Engagement) on a scale of 1 to 7. A rating of 1 or 2 indicates that the dimension was never or rarely evident during the visit. For example, a rating of 1 or 2 on Teacher Sensitivity indicates that, at the

time of the visit, the teacher was not aware of students who needed extra support or attention, was unresponsive to or dismissive of students, or was ineffective at addressing students' problems; as a result, students rarely sought support from the teacher or communicated openly with the teacher. A rating of 3, 4, or 5 indicates that the dimension was evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. A rating of 6 or 7 indicates that the dimension was reflected in all or most classroom activities and in a way that included all or most students.

Members of the observation team who visited the classrooms all received training on the CLASS protocol and then passed a rigorous certification exam for each CLASS protocol to ensure that they were able to accurately rate the dimensions. All observers must pass an exam annually to maintain their certification.

Research on CLASS protocol shows that students in classrooms that rated high using this observation tool have greater gains in social skills and academic success than students in classrooms with lower ratings (MET Project, 2010; CASTL, n.d.). Furthermore, small improvements on these domains can affect student outcomes: "The ability to demonstrate even small changes in effective interactions has practical implications—differences in just over 1 point on the CLASS 7-point scale translate into improved achievement and social skill development for students" (CASTL, n.d., p. 3).

In this report, each CLASS dimension is defined, and descriptions of the dimensions at the high (6 or 7), middle (3, 4, or 5), and low levels (1 or 2) are presented (*definitions and rating descriptions are derived from the CLASS K–3, Upper Elementary, and Secondary Manuals*). For each dimension we indicate the frequency of classroom observations across the ratings and provide a districtwide average of the observed classrooms. In cases where a dimension is included in more than one CLASS manual level, those results are combined on the dimension-specific pages. In the summary of ratings table following the dimension-specific pages the averages for every dimension are presented by grade band (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12). For each dimension, we indicate the grade levels for which this dimension is included.



## Positive Climate

---

### *Emotional Support domain, Grades K–12*

Positive Climate reflects the emotional connection between the teacher and students and among students and the warmth, respect, and enjoyment communicated by verbal and nonverbal interactions (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 23, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 21, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 21). Table 3 (as well as tables for the remaining dimensions) includes the number of classrooms for each rating on each dimension and the district average for that dimension.

**Table 3. Positive Climate: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

#### **Positive Climate District Average\*: 5.3**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	0	1	21	30	88	76	49	477	5.3
Grades K-5	0	1	21	30	88	76	49	265	5.4
Grades 6-8	1	2	9	13	24	19	15	83	5.1
Grades 9-12	0	2	9	27	35	39	17	129	5.2

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 3, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 1] + [2 \times 5] + [3 \times 39] + [4 \times 70] + [5 \times 147] + [6 \times 134] + [7 \times 81]) \div 477 \text{ observations} = 5.3$

**Ratings in the Low Range.** All indicators are absent or only minimally present. Teachers and students do not appear to share a warm, supportive relationship. Interpersonal connections are not evident or only minimally evident. Affect in the classroom is flat, and there are rarely instances of teachers and students smiling, sharing humor, or laughing together. There are no, or very few, positive communications among the teacher and students; the teacher does not communicate encouragement. There is no evidence that students and the teacher respect one another or that the teacher encourages students to respect one another.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** There are some indications that the teacher and students share a warm and supportive relationship, but some students may be excluded from this relationship, either by the teacher or the students. Some relationships appear constrained—for example, the teacher expresses a perfunctory interest in students, or encouragement seems to be an automatic statement and is not sincere. Sometimes, teachers and students demonstrate respect for one another.

**Ratings in the High Range.** There are many indications that the relationship among students and the teacher is positive and warm. The teacher is typically in close proximity to students, and encouragement is sincere and personal. There are frequent displays of shared laughter, smiles, and enthusiasm. Teachers and students show respect for one another (e.g., listening, using calm voices, using polite language). Positive communication (both verbal and nonverbal) and mutual respect are evident throughout the session.

# Teacher Sensitivity

*Emotional Support domain, Grades K–12*

Teacher Sensitivity encompasses the teacher’s awareness of and responsiveness to students’ academic and emotional needs. High levels of sensitivity facilitate students’ abilities to actively explore and learn because the teacher consistently provides comfort, reassurance, and encouragement (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 32, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 27, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 27).

**Table 4. Teacher Sensitivity: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Teacher Sensitivity District Average\*: 5.5**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	0	4	5	26	65	94	71	477	5.5
Grades K-5	0	4	5	26	65	94	71	265	5.7
Grades 6-8	0	3	5	9	25	25	16	83	5.3
Grades 9-12	0	4	12	23	38	30	22	129	5.1

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 4, the district average is computed as:  $([2 \times 11] + [3 \times 22] + [4 \times 58] + [5 \times 128] + [6 \times 149] + [7 \times 109]) \div 477 \text{ observations} = 5.5$

**Ratings in the Low Range.** In these sessions, the teacher has not been aware of students who need extra support and pays little attention to students’ needs. As a result, students are frustrated, confused, and disengaged. The teacher is unresponsive to and dismissive of students and may ignore students, squash their enthusiasm, and not allow them to share their moods or feelings. The teacher is not effective in addressing students’ needs and does not appropriately acknowledge situations that may be upsetting to students. Students rarely seek support from the teacher and minimize conversations with the teacher, not sharing ideas or responding to questions.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** The teacher is sometimes aware of student needs or aware of only a limited type of student needs, such as academic needs, not social-emotional needs. Or the teacher may be aware of some students and not of other students. The teacher does not always realize a student is confused and needs extra help or when a student already knows the material being taught. The teacher may be responsive at times to students but at other times may ignore or dismiss students. The teacher may respond only to students who are upbeat and positive and not support students who are upset. Sometimes, the teacher is effective in addressing students’ concerns or problems, but not always.

**Ratings in the High Range.** The teacher’s awareness of students and their needs is consistent and accurate. The teacher may predict how difficult a new task is for a student and acknowledge this difficulty. The teacher is responsive to students’ comments and behaviors, whether positive or negative. The teacher consistently addresses students’ problems and concerns and is effective in doing so. Students are obviously comfortable with the teacher and share ideas, work comfortably together, and ask and respond to questions, even difficult questions.

## Regard for Student Perspectives

---

*Emotional Support domain, Grades K–12*

Regard for Student Perspectives captures the degree to which the teacher’s interactions with students and classroom activities place an emphasis on students’ interests, motivations, and points of view and encourage student responsibility and autonomy (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 38, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 35, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 35).

**Table 5. Regard for Student Perspectives: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Regard for Student Perspectives District Average\*: 3.9**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	1	27	67	58	69	35	8	477	3.9
Grades K-5	1	27	67	58	69	35	8	265	4.1
Grades 6-8	5	13	21	15	19	10	0	83	3.7
Grades 9-12	6	19	38	34	24	6	2	129	3.6

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 5, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 12] + [2 \times 59] + [3 \times 126] + [4 \times 107] + [5 \times 112] + [6 \times 51] + [7 \times 10]) \div 477 \text{ observations} = 3.9$

**Ratings in the Low Range.** At the low range, the teacher exhibits an inflexible, rigid adherence to his or her plan, without considering student ideas or allowing students to make contributions. The teacher inhibits student enthusiasm by imposing guidelines or making remarks that inhibit student expression. The teacher may rigidly adhere to a lesson plan and not respond to student interests. The teacher does not allow students any autonomy on how they conduct an activity, may control materials tightly, and may offer few opportunities for students to help out with classroom responsibilities. There are few opportunities for students to talk and express themselves.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** The teacher exhibits control at times and at other times follows the students’ lead and gives them some choices and opportunities to follow their interests. There are some opportunities for students to exercise autonomy, but student choice is limited. The teacher may assign students responsibility in the classroom, but in a limited way. At times, the teacher dominates the discussion, but at other times the teacher allows students to share ideas, although only at a minimal level or for a short period of time.

**Ratings in the High Range.** The teacher is flexible in following student leads, interests, and ideas and looks for ways to meaningfully engage students. Although the teacher has a lesson plan, students’ ideas are incorporated into the lesson plan. The teacher consistently supports student autonomy and provides meaningful leadership opportunities. Students have frequent opportunities to talk, share ideas, and work together. Students have appropriate freedom of movement during activities.

## Negative Climate

---

*Emotional Support domain, Grades K– 3*  
*Classroom Organization domain, Grades 4– 12*

Negative Climate reflects the overall level of expressed negativity in the classroom. The frequency, quality, and intensity of teacher and student negativity are key to this dimension (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 28, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 55, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 55). For the purposes of this report, we have inversed the observers scores, to be consistent with the range scores across all dimensions. Therefore, a high range score in this dimension indicates an absence of negative climate, and a low range score indicates the presence of negative climate.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 6. Negative Climate: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Negative Climate District Average\*: 6.8**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	1	1	3	7	25	228	265	6.8
Grades 6-8	0	0	2	3	4	7	67	83	6.6
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	0	3	9	117	129	6.9

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 6, the district average is computed as:  $([2 \times 1] + [3 \times 3] + [4 \times 6] + [5 \times 14] + [6 \times 41] + [7 \times 412]) \div 477 \text{ observations} = 6.8$

**Ratings in the Low Range.** Negativity is pervasive. The teacher may express constant irritation, annoyance, or anger; unduly criticize students; or consistently use a harsh tone and/or take a harsh stance as he or she interacts with students. Threats or yelling are frequently used to establish control. Language is disrespectful and sarcastic. Severe negativity, such as the following actions, would lead to a high rating on negative climate, even if the action is not extended: students bullying one another, a teacher hitting a student, or students physically fighting with one another.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** There are some expressions of mild negativity by the teacher or students. The teacher may express irritability, use a harsh tone, and/or express annoyance—usually during difficult moments in the classroom. Threats or yelling may be used to establish control over the classroom, but not constantly; they are used more as a response to situations. At times, the teacher and students may be sarcastic or disrespectful toward one another.

**Ratings in the High Range.** There is no display of negativity: No strong expressions of anger or aggression are exhibited, either by the teacher or students; if there is such a display, it is contained and does not escalate. The teacher does not issue threats or yell to establish control. The teacher and students are respectful and do not express sarcasm.

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<sup>4</sup> When observers rate this dimension it is scored so that a low rating (indicating little or no evidence of a negative climate) is better than a high rating (indicating abundant evidence of a negative climate). To be consistent across all ratings, for the purposes of this report we have inversed this scoring.

## Behavior Management

---

*Classroom Organization domain, Grades K–12*

Behavior Management refers to the teacher’s ability to provide clear behavioral expectations and use effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 45, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 41, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 41).

**Table 7. Behavior Management: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Behavior Management District Average\*: 6.2**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	1	8	13	29	73	141	265	6.2
Grades 6-8	1	2	3	7	15	26	29	83	5.7
Grades 9-12	0	0	6	5	8	22	88	129	6.4

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 7, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 1] + [2 \times 3] + [3 \times 17] + [4 \times 25] + [5 \times 52] + [6 \times 121] + [7 \times 258]) \div 477 \text{ observations} = 6.2$

**Ratings in the Low Range.** At the low range, the classroom is chaotic. There are no rules and expectations, or they are not enforced consistently. The teacher does not monitor the classroom effectively and only reacts to student disruption, which is frequent. There are frequent instances of misbehavior in the classroom, and the teacher’s attempts to redirect misbehavior are ineffective. The teacher does not use cues, such as eye contact, slight touches, gestures, or physical proximity, to respond to and redirect negative behavior.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** Although rules and expectations may be stated, they are not consistently enforced, or the rules may be unclear. Sometimes, the teacher proactively anticipates and prevents misbehavior, but at other times the teacher ignores behavior problems until it is too late. Misbehavior may escalate because redirection is not always effective. Episodes of misbehavior are periodic.

**Ratings in the High Range.** At the high range, the rules and guidelines for behavior are clear, and they are consistently reinforced by the teacher. The teacher monitors the classroom and prevents problems from developing, using subtle cues to redirect behavior and address situations before they escalate. The teacher focuses on positive behavior and consistently affirms students’ desirable behaviors. The teacher effectively uses cues to redirect behavior. There are no, or very few, instances of student misbehavior or disruptions.

## Productivity

*Classroom Organization domain, Grades K–12*

Productivity considers how well the teacher manages instructional time and routines and provides activities for students so that they have the opportunity to be involved in learning activities (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 51, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 49, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 49).

**Table 8. Productivity: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Productivity District Average\*: 6.0**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	2	1	3	15	34	65	145	265	6.2
Grades 6-8	0	3	8	4	11	22	35	83	5.8
Grades 9-12	1	3	12	11	13	21	68	129	5.8

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 8, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 3] + [2 \times 7] + [3 \times 23] + [4 \times 30] + [5 \times 58] + [6 \times 108] + [7 \times 248]) \div 477 \text{ observations} = 6.0$

**Ratings in the Low Range.** At the low level, the teacher provides few activities for students. Much time is spent on managerial tasks (such as distributing papers) and/or on behavior management. Frequently during the observation, students have little to do and spend time waiting. The routines of the classroom are not clear and, as a result, students waste time, are not engaged, and are confused. Transitions take a long time and/or are too frequent. The teacher does not have activities organized and ready and seems to be caught up in last-minute preparations.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** At the middle range, the teacher does provide activities for students but loses learning time to disruptions or management tasks. There are certain times when the teacher provides clear activities to students, but there are other times when students wait and lose focus. Some students (or all students, at some point) do not know what is expected of them. Some of the transitions may take too long, or classrooms may be productive during certain periods but then not productive during transitions. Although the teacher is mostly prepared for the class, last-minute preparations may still infringe on learning time.

**Ratings in the High Range.** The classroom runs very smoothly. The teacher provides a steady flow of activities for students, so students do not have downtime and are not confused about what to do next. The routines of the classroom are efficient, and all students know how to move from one activity to another and where materials are. Students understand the teacher's instructions and directions. Transitions are quick, and there are not too many of them. The teacher is fully prepared for the lesson.

## Instructional Learning Formats

*Classroom Organization domain, Grades K–3*

*Instructional Support domain, Grades 4– 12*

Instructional Learning Formats refer to the ways in which the teacher maximizes students’ interest, engagement, and abilities to learn from the lesson and activities (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 57; *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 63, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 61).

**Table 9. Instructional Learning Formats: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Instructional Learning Formats District Average\*: 5.0**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	0	0	19	31	105	77	33	477	5.0
Grades K-5	0	0	19	31	105	77	33	265	5.3
Grades 6-8	1	4	7	15	27	25	4	83	4.9
Grades 9-12	1	3	19	34	41	25	6	129	4.6

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 9, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 2] + [2 \times 7] + [3 \times 45] + [4 \times 80] + [5 \times 173] + [6 \times 127] + [7 \times 43]) \div 477 \text{ observations} = 5.0$

**Ratings in the Low Range.** The teacher exerts little effort in facilitating engagement in the lesson. Learning activities may be limited and seem to be at the rote level, with little teacher involvement. The teacher relies on one learning modality (e.g., listening) and does not use other modalities (e.g., movement, visual displays) to convey information and enhance learning. Or the teacher may be ineffective in using other modalities, not choosing the right props for the students or the classroom conditions. Students are uninterested and uninvolved in the lesson. The teacher does not attempt to guide students toward learning objectives and does not help them focus on the lesson by providing appropriate tools and asking effective questions.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** At the middle range, the teacher sometimes facilitates engagement in the lesson but at other times does not, or the teacher facilitates engagement for some students and not for other students. The teacher may not allow students enough time to explore or answer questions. Sometimes, the teacher uses a variety of modalities to help students reach a learning objective, but at other times the teacher does not. Student engagement is inconsistent, or some students are engaged and other students are not. At times, students are aware of the learning objective and at other times they are not. The teacher may sometimes use strategies to help students organize information but at other times does not.

**Ratings in the High Range.** The teacher has multiple strategies and tools to facilitate engagement and learning and encourage participation. The teacher may move around, talk and play with students, ask open-ended questions of students, and allow students to explore. A variety of tools and props are used, including movement and visual/auditory resources. Students are consistently interested and engaged in the activities and lessons. The teacher focuses students on the learning

objectives, which students understand. The teacher uses advanced organizers to prepare students for an activity, as well as reorientation strategies that help students regain focus.



## Concept Development

*Instructional Support domain, Grades K–3*

Concept Development refers to the teacher’s use of instructional discussions and activities to promote students’ higher order thinking skills and cognition and the teacher’s focus on understanding rather than on rote instruction (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 64).

**Table 10. Concept Development: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Concept Development District Average\*: 3.7**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-3**	7	36	48	39	35	17	7	189	3.7

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 10, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 7] + [2 \times 36] + [3 \times 48] + [4 \times 39] + [5 \times 35] + [6 \times 17] + [7 \times 7]) \div 189 \text{ observations} = 3.7$

\*\*Concept Development does not appear in the CLASS Upper Elementary Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades K-3 only.

**Ratings in the Low Range.** At the low range, the teacher does not attempt to develop students’ understanding of ideas and concepts, focusing instead on basic facts and skills. Discussion and activities do not encourage students to analyze and reason. There are few, if any, opportunities for students to create or generate ideas and products. The teacher does not link concepts to one another and does not ask students to make connections with previous content or their actual lives. The activities and the discussion are removed from students’ lives and from their prior knowledge.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** To some extent, the teacher uses discussions and activities to encourage students to analyze and reason and focuses somewhat on understanding of ideas. The activities and discussions are not fully developed, however, and there is still instructional time that focuses on facts and basic skills. Students may be provided some opportunities for creating and generating ideas, but the opportunities are occasional and not planned out. Although some concepts may be linked and also related to students’ previous learning, such efforts are brief. The teacher makes some effort to relate concepts to students’ lives but does not elaborate enough to make the relationship meaningful to students.

**Ratings in the High Range.** At the high range, the teacher frequently guides students to analyze and reason during discussions and activities. Most of the questions are open ended and encourage students to think about connections and implications. Teachers use problem solving, experimentation, and prediction; comparison and classification; and evaluation and summarizing to promote analysis and reasoning. The teacher provides students with opportunities to be creative and generate ideas. The teacher consistently links concepts to one another and to previous learning and relates concepts to students’ lives.

## Content Understanding

*Instructional Support domain, Grades 4– 12*

Content Understanding refers to the depth of lesson content and the approaches used to help students comprehend the framework, key ideas, and procedures in an academic discipline. At a high level, this dimension refers to interactions among the teacher and students that lead to an integrated understanding of facts, skills, concepts, and principles (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 70, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 68).

**Table 11. Content Understanding: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Content Understanding District Average\*: 4.2**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	288	4.2
Grades 4-5**	2	5	12	16	24	10	7	76	4.5
Grades 6-8	4	8	20	15	23	12	1	83	4.0
Grades 9-12	5	10	22	44	30	13	5	129	4.1

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 11, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 11] + [2 \times 23] + [3 \times 54] + [4 \times 75] + [5 \times 77] + [6 \times 35] + [7 \times 13]) \div 288 \text{ observations} = 4.2$

\*\*Content Understanding does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

**Ratings in the Low Range.** At the low range, the focus of the class is primarily on presenting discrete pieces of topically related information, absent broad, organizing ideas. The discussion and materials fail to effectively communicate the essential attributes of the concepts and procedures to students. The teacher makes little effort to elicit or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions or to integrate previously learned material when presenting new information.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** At the middle range, the focus of the class is sometimes on meaningful discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. At other times, the focus is on discrete pieces of information. Class discussion and materials communicate some of the essential attributes of concepts and procedures, but examples are limited in scope or not consistently provided. The teacher makes some attempt to elicit and/or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions and/or to integrate information with previously learned materials; however, these moments are limited in depth or inconsistent.

**Ratings in the High Range.** At the high range, the focus of the class is on encouraging deep understanding of content through the provision of meaningful, interactive discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. Class discussion and materials consistently communicate the essential attributes of concepts and procedures to students. New concepts and procedures and broad ideas are consistently linked to students' prior knowledge in ways that advance their understanding and clarify misconceptions.

## Analysis and Inquiry

*Instructional Support domain, Grades 4– 12*

Analysis and Inquiry assesses the degree to which students are engaged in higher level thinking skills through their application of knowledge and skills to novel and/or open-ended problems, tasks, and questions. Opportunities for engaging in metacognition (thinking about thinking) also are included (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 81, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 76).

**Table 12. Analysis and Inquiry: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Analysis and Inquiry District Average\*: 3.4**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	288	3.4
Grades 4-5**	9	16	17	13	15	5	1	76	3.4
Grades 6-8	13	13	17	17	13	9	1	83	3.4
Grades 9-12	15	18	38	36	16	6	0	129	3.3

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 12, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 37] + [2 \times 47] + [3 \times 72] + [4 \times 66] + [5 \times 44] + [6 \times 20] + [7 \times 2]) \div 288 \text{ observations} = 3.4$

\*\*Analysis and Inquiry does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

**Ratings in the Low Range.** At the low range, students do not engage in higher order thinking skills. Instruction is presented in a rote manner, and there are no opportunities for students to engage in novel or open-ended tasks. Students are not challenged to apply previous knowledge and skills to a new problem, nor are they encouraged to think about, evaluate, or reflect on their own learning. Students do not have opportunities to plan their own learning experiences.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** Students occasionally engage in higher order thinking through analysis and inquiry, but the episodes are brief or limited in depth. The teacher provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills within familiar contexts and offers guidance to students but does not provide opportunities for analysis and problem solving within novel contexts and/or without teacher support. Students have occasional opportunities to think about their own thinking through explanations, self-evaluations, reflection, and planning; these opportunities, however, are brief and limited in depth.

**Ratings in the High Range.** At the high range, students consistently engage in extended opportunities to use higher order thinking through analysis and inquiry. The teacher provides opportunities for students to independently solve or reason through novel and open-ended tasks that require students to select, utilize, and apply existing knowledge and skills. Students have multiple opportunities to think about their own thinking through explanations, self-evaluations, reflection, and planning.

## Quality of Feedback

*Instructional Support domain, Grades K– 12*

Quality of Feedback refers to the degree to which the teacher provides feedback that expands learning and understanding and encourages continued participation in the learning activity (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 72). In the upper elementary and secondary classrooms, significant feedback also may be provided by peers (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 89, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 93). Regardless of the source, the focus of the feedback motivates learning.

**Table 13. Quality of Feedback: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Quality of Feedback District Average\*: 4.0**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	8	25	51	55	80	33	13	477	4.0
Grades K-5	8	25	51	55	80	33	13	265	4.2
Grades 6-8	8	11	21	19	8	14	2	83	3.7
Grades 9-12	6	21	30	33	21	14	4	129	3.8

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 13, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 22] + [2 \times 57] + [3 \times 102] + [4 \times 107] + [5 \times 109] + [6 \times 61] + [7 \times 19]) \div 477 \text{ observations} = 4.0$

**Ratings in the Low Range.** At the low range, the teacher dismisses incorrect responses or misperceptions and rarely scaffolds student learning. The teacher is more interested in students providing the correct answer than understanding. Feedback is perfunctory. The teacher may not provide opportunities to learn whether students understand or are interested. The teacher rarely questions students or asks them to explain their thinking and reasons for their responses. The teacher does not or rarely provides information that might expand student understanding and rarely offers encouragement that increases student effort and persistence.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** In the middle range, the teacher sometimes scaffolds students, but this is not consistent. On occasion, the teacher facilitates feedback loops so that students may elaborate and expand on their thinking, but these moments are not sustained long enough to accomplish a learning objective. Sometimes, the teacher asks students about or prompts them to explain their thinking and provides information to help students understand, but sometimes the feedback is perfunctory. At times, the teacher encourages student efforts and persistence.

**Ratings in the High Range.** In this range, the teacher frequently scaffolds students who are having difficulty, providing hints or assistance as needed. The teacher engages students in feedback loops to help them understand ideas or reach the right response. The teacher often questions students, encourages them to explain their thinking, and provides additional information that may help students understand. The teacher regularly encourages students' efforts and persistence.

## Language Modeling

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*Instructional Support domain, Grades K–3*

Language Modeling refers to the quality and amount of the teacher’s use of language stimulation and language facilitation techniques (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 79).

**Table 14. Language Modeling: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Language Modeling District Average\*: 4.1**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-3**	3	21	34	57	49	20	5	189	4.1

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 14, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 3] + [2 \times 21] + [3 \times 34] + [4 \times 57] + [5 \times 49] + [6 \times 20] + [7 \times 5]) \div 189 \text{ observations} = 4.1$

\*\*Language Modeling does not appear in the CLASS Upper Elementary Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades K-3 only.

**Ratings in the Low Range.** In the low range, there are few conversations in the classroom, particularly between the students and the teacher. The teacher responds to students’ initiating talk with only a few words, limits students’ use of language (in responding to questions) and asks questions that mainly elicit closed-ended responses. The teacher does not or rarely extends students’ responses or repeats them for clarification. The teacher does not engage in self-talk or parallel talk—explaining what he or she or the students are doing. The teacher does not use new words or advanced language with students. The language used has little variety.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** In this range, the teacher talks with students and shows some interest in students, but the conversations are limited and not prolonged. Usually, the teacher directs the conversations, although the conversations may focus on topics of interest to students. More often, there is a basic exchange of information but limited conversation. The teacher asks a mix of closed- and open-ended questions, although the closed-ended questions may require only short responses. Sometimes, the teacher extends students’ responses or repeats what students say. Sometimes, the teacher maps his or her own actions and the students’ actions through language and description. The teacher sometimes uses advanced language with students.

**Ratings in the High Range.** There are frequent conversations in the classroom, particularly between students and the teacher, and these conversations promote language use. Students are encouraged to converse and feel they are valued conversational partners. The teacher asks many open-ended questions that require students to communicate more complex ideas. The teacher often extends or repeats student responses. Frequently, the teacher maps his or her actions and student actions descriptively and uses advanced language with students.

## Instructional Dialogue

*Instructional Support domain, Grades 4– 12*

Instructional Dialogue captures the purposeful use of content-focused discussion among teachers and students that is cumulative, with the teacher supporting students to chain ideas together in ways that lead to deeper understanding of content. Students take an active role in these dialogues, and both the teacher and students use strategies that facilitate extended dialogue (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 97, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 101).

**Table 15. Instructional Dialogue: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Instructional Dialogue District Average\*: 3.6**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	288	3.6
Grades 4-5**	5	11	4	32	14	6	4	76	4.0
Grades 6-8	11	15	18	23	7	7	2	83	3.3
Grades 9-12	15	12	29	36	23	11	3	129	3.7

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 15, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 31] + [2 \times 38] + [3 \times 51] + [4 \times 91] + [5 \times 44] + [6 \times 24] + [7 \times 9]) \div 288 \text{ observations} = 3.6$

\*\*Instructional Dialogue does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

**Ratings in the Low Range.** At the low range, there are no or few discussions in the class, the discussions are not related to content or skill development, or the discussions contain only simple question-response exchanges between the teacher and students. The class is dominated by teacher talk, and discussion is limited. The teacher and students ask closed-ended questions; rarely acknowledge, report, or extend other students' comments; and/or appear disinterested in other students' comments, resulting in many students not being engaged in instructional dialogues.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** At this range, there are occasional content-based discussions in class among teachers and students; however, these exchanges are brief or quickly move from one topic to another without follow-up questions or comments from the teacher and other students. The class is mostly dominated by teacher talk, although there are times when students take a more active role, or there are distributed dialogues that involve only a few students in the class. The teacher and students sometimes facilitate and encourage more elaborate dialogue, but such efforts are brief, inconsistent, or ineffective at consistently engaging students in extended dialogues.

**Ratings in the High Range.** At the high range, there are frequent, content-driven discussions in the class between teachers and students or among students. The discussions build depth of knowledge through cumulative, contingent exchanges. The class dialogues are distributed in a way that the teacher and the majority of students take an active role or students are actively engaged in instructional dialogues with each other. The teacher and students frequently use strategies that

encourage more elaborate dialogue, such as open-ended questions, repetition or extension, and active listening. Students respond to these techniques by fully participating in extended dialogues.

## Student Engagement

*Student Engagement domain, Grades 4–12*

Student Engagement refers to the extent to which all students in the class are focused and participating in the learning activity that is presented or facilitated by the teacher. The difference between passive engagement and active engagement is reflected in this rating (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 105).

**Table 16. Student Engagement: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average**

**Student Engagement District Average\*: 5.3**

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
								<b>288</b>	<b>5.3</b>
Grades 4-5**	0	0	0	10	26	25	15	76	5.6
Grades 6-8	0	1	5	17	24	26	10	83	5.2
Grades 9-12	4	3	8	17	34	46	17	129	5.2

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 16, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 4] + [2 \times 4] + [3 \times 13] + [4 \times 44] + [5 \times 84] + [6 \times 97] + [7 \times 42]) \div 288 \text{ observations} = 5.3$

\*\*Student Engagement does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

**Ratings in the Low Range.** In the low range, the majority of students appear distracted or disengaged.

**Ratings in the Middle Range.** In the middle range, students are passively engaged, listening to or watching the teacher; student engagement is mixed, with the majority of students actively engaged for part of the time and disengaged for the rest of the time; or there is a mix of student engagement, with some students actively engaged and some students disengaged.

**Ratings in the High Range.** In the high range, most students are actively engaged in the classroom discussions and activities.



## Summary of Average Ratings: Grades K–5

**Table 17. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades K–5**

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<b>Emotional Support Domain</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>5.5</b>
Positive Climate	0	1	21	30	88	76	49	265	5.4
Negative Climate**	0	1	1	3	7	25	228	265	6.8
Teacher Sensitivity	0	4	5	26	65	94	71	265	5.7
Regard for Student Perspectives	1	27	67	58	69	35	8	265	4.1
<b>Classroom Organization Domain</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>5.9</b>
Behavior Management	0	1	8	13	29	73	141	265	6.2
Productivity	2	1	3	15	34	65	145	265	6.2
Instructional Learning Formats***	0	0	19	31	105	77	33	265	5.3
<b>Instructional Support Domain</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>4.0</b>
Concept Development (K-3 only)	7	36	48	39	35	17	7	189	3.7
Content Understanding (UE only)	2	5	12	16	24	10	7	76	4.5
Analysis and Inquiry (UE only)	9	16	17	13	15	5	1	76	3.4
Quality of Feedback	8	25	51	55	80	33	13	265	4.2
Language Modeling (K-3 only)	3	21	34	57	49	20	5	189	4.1
Instructional Dialogue (UE only)	5	11	4	32	14	6	4	76	4.0
<b>Student Engagement (UE only)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>5.6</b>

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as:  $([2 \times 1] + [3 \times 21] + [4 \times 30] + [5 \times 88] + [6 \times 76] + [7 \times 49]) \div 265 \text{ observations} = 5.4$

\*\*Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment:  $([2 \times 1] + [3 \times 1] + [4 \times 3] + [5 \times 7] + [6 \times 25] + [7 \times 228]) \div 265 \text{ observations} = 6.8$ . In addition, Negative Climate appears in the Classroom Organization Domain for the Upper Elementary Manual.

\*\*\*Instructional Learning Formats appears in the Instructional Support Domain for the Upper Elementary Manual.

## Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 6–8

**Table 18. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades 6–8**

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<b>Emotional Support Domain</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>4.7</b>
Positive Climate	1	2	9	13	24	19	15	83	5.1
Teacher Sensitivity	0	3	5	9	25	25	16	83	5.3
Regard for Student Perspectives	5	13	21	15	19	10	0	83	3.7
<b>Classroom Organization Domain</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>6.0</b>
Behavior Management	1	2	3	7	15	26	29	83	5.7
Productivity	0	3	8	4	11	22	35	83	5.8
Negative Climate**	0	0	2	3	4	7	67	83	6.6
<b>Instructional Support Domain</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>3.9</b>
Instructional Learning Formats	1	4	7	15	27	25	4	83	4.9
Content Understanding	4	8	20	15	23	12	1	83	4.0
Analysis and Inquiry	13	13	17	17	13	9	1	83	3.4
Quality of Feedback	8	11	21	19	8	14	2	83	3.7
Instructional Dialogue	11	15	18	23	7	7	2	83	3.3
<b>Student Engagement</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>5.2</b>

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as:  $([1 \times 1] + [2 \times 2] + [3 \times 9] + [4 \times 13] + [5 \times 24] + [6 \times 19] + [7 \times 15]) \div 83 \text{ observations} = 5.1$

\*\*Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment:  $([3 \times 2] + [4 \times 3] + [5 \times 4] + [6 \times 7] + [7 \times 67]) \div 83 \text{ observations} = 6.6$

## Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 9–12

**Table 19. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades 9–12**

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<b>Emotional Support Domain</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>4.6</b>
Positive Climate	0	2	9	27	35	39	17	129	5.2
Teacher Sensitivity	0	4	12	23	38	30	22	129	5.1
Regard for Student Perspectives	6	19	38	34	24	6	2	129	3.6
<b>Classroom Organization Domain</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>6.4</b>
Behavior Management	0	0	6	5	8	22	88	129	6.4
Productivity	1	3	12	11	13	21	68	129	5.8
Negative Climate**	0	0	0	0	3	9	117	129	6.9
<b>Instructional Support Domain</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>3.9</b>
Instructional Learning Formats	1	3	19	34	41	25	6	129	4.6
Content Understanding	5	10	22	44	30	13	5	129	4.1
Analysis and Inquiry	15	18	38	36	16	6	0	129	3.3
Quality of Feedback	6	21	30	33	21	14	4	129	3.8
Instructional Dialogue	15	12	29	36	23	11	3	129	3.7
<b>Student Engagement</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>5.2</b>

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as:  $([2 \times 2] + [3 \times 9] + [4 \times 27] + [5 \times 35] + [6 \times 39] + [7 \times 17]) \div 129 \text{ observations} = 5.2$

\*\*Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment:  $([5 \times 3] + [6 \times 9] + [7 \times 117]) \div 129 \text{ observations} = 6.9$

## References

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