



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

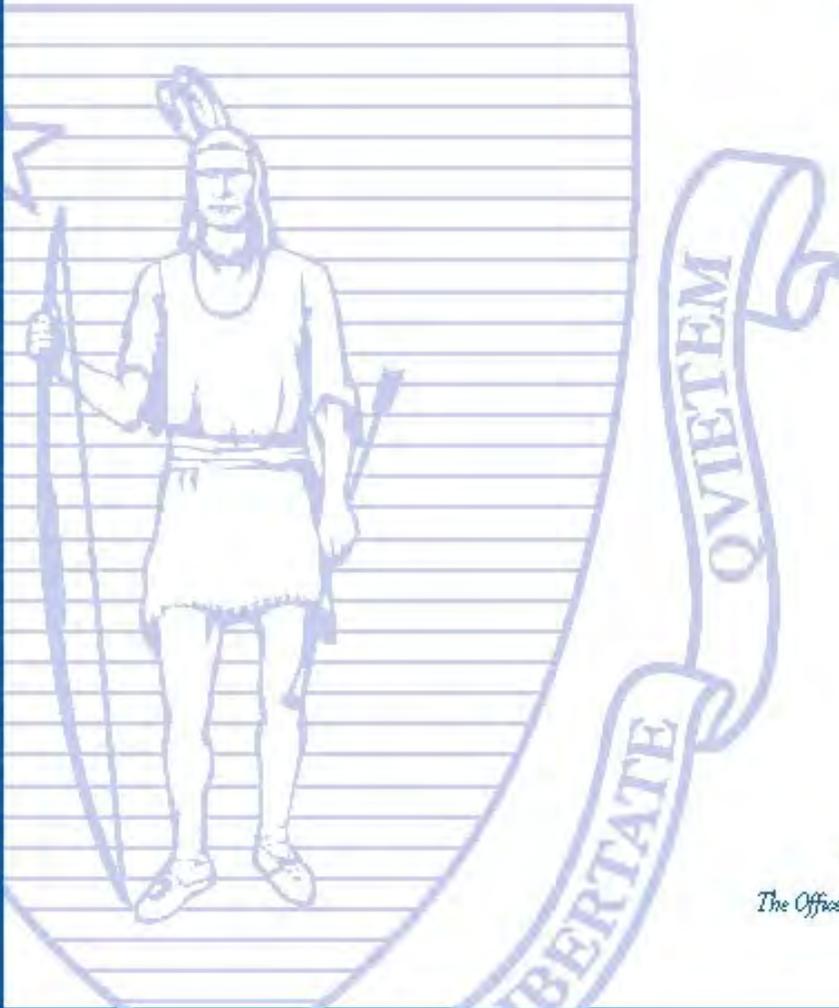
# School District Examination Report: Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical High School District



*data driven*

*standards based*

*learner centered* →



*The Education Management Audit Council  
The Office for Educational Quality and Accountability*

November 21, 2003

# **The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

## **Office of Educational Quality and Accountability**

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The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability would like to acknowledge the professional cooperation extended to the audit team by the Department of Education; the Superintendent-Director of the Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical High School District, Frank Vacirca; and the school department staff of Greater Lawrence Vocational Technical High School District.

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## **Executive Summary**

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) examined the Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical High School District (Greater Lawrence Technical) in mid-May of 2003. During 1999-2002, it was among the lowest performing school systems in the Commonwealth. The following provides a summary of the findings of the examination and the district's performance on the 2002 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test.

### **Proficiency/Achievement:**

- Greater Lawrence Technical's Combined Proficiency Index (CPI) of 42.5 based on the 2002 MCAS results placed the district as the lowest performing vocational-technical school district in the Commonwealth. The state's vocational-technical school district average for the CPI was 57.8 in 2002. On the ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) and math Proficiency Index (MPI), the district scored 47.3 and 37.9, respectively. The state's vocational-technical average for EPI was 64.8 and the MPI was 50.8.
- On the 2002 MCAS test, 91.3% of the students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. This figure was 13.1 percentage points above the state's average percentage for vocational-technical school districts.
- On the 2002 MCAS test, in ELA, 87.8% of the students and, in math, 94.6% of the students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. These figures were 16 percentage points in ELA and 10.1 percentage points in math above the state's average percentages for vocational-technical school districts.
- By December of 2002, 82% of Greater Lawrence Technical's Class of 2003 had earned a Competency Determination (CD) as compared to 90% of the statewide Class of 2003.
- By December of 2002, 52% of Greater Lawrence Technical's Class of 2004 had earned a Competency Determination as compared to 84% of the statewide Class of 2004.

### **Equity of Achievement/Proficiency:**

- On the 2002 MCAS test, 90% of the regular education and 97% of the special education students in Greater Lawrence Technical scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. These figures were 15.6 and 6.3 percentage points above the state's average percentages for these subgroups.

- On the 2002 MCAS test, 93.9% of the FRL/Y students in Greater Lawrence Technical scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories. This figure was 7.8 percentage points above the state’s average for FRL/Y students.
- On the 2002 MCAS test, FRL/Y and special education students in Greater Lawrence Technical scored 1.6 and 18.2 PI points below the district’s average PI.

**Improvement:**

- Between 1999-2002, on the MCAS test in ELA, Greater Lawrence Technical’s EPI rating increased from 33.1 to 47.3.
- Between 1999-2002, on the MCAS test in math, Greater Lawrence Technical’s MPI rating increased from 18.5 to 37.9.

**Equity of Improvement:**

- Between 2000-2002, the subgroups in Greater Lawrence Technical experienced significant increases in their ELA and math PI ratings. For example, in some instances, subgroups such as FRL/Y, Hispanic-American, regular education, and White students improved their MCAS test results by as much as 18.6 and 12.6 PI points within three years.

**Participation and Access:**

- On the 2002 MCAS test, Greater Lawrence Technical’s student test participation rates in ELA and math were 90.74% and 93.73%, respectively. These figures were both below the state’s expectation as set forth in the M.G.L. Chapter 69, section 1D and 1I, and the federal *No Child Left Behind* 95% standard for test participation, which will become effective in 2002-2003.

**Summary of Preliminary Findings by Domain**

**Assessment and Evaluation:**

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on six and ‘Poor’ on five of the eleven performance indicators in this domain.
- For the time period under examination (1999-2002), the district demonstrated that administrators and some teachers were provided with training to analyze aggregate and individual test results in order to improve curricula and instructional practices.
- The district did not meet the state participation standard of 95% for all students tested in ELA, with the exception of 1999 (95%). During the last four years (1999-2002), the district did not meet the state participation rate of 95% for all students tested in math, with the exception of 1999, which was 96%.

- For the time period under examination, the district's personnel evaluations were not current.
- The district did not have a systematic evaluation process that coordinated student assessment data, program, and personnel performance evaluation data.

**Curriculum and Instruction:**

- The EQA examiners rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on nine, 'Poor' on four, and 'Unsatisfactory' on one of the fourteen performance indicators in this domain.
- For the period of time under examination, the district had a comprehensive district curriculum in place.
- The district had a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan in place that contained all of the required components; however, the success rate for all student populations did not improve.
- For the period of time under review, teachers were not directly involved in the development of the district's professional development plan.

**Student Academic and Support Services:**

- The EQA examiners rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on eleven and 'Poor' on two of the thirteen performance indicators in this domain.
- For the period under examination, the district had a comprehensive support services program for students not meeting grade-level proficiency; however, MCAS test data indicated that all students were not performing at grade-level proficiency.
- For the period of time under review, it was evident that the district monitored individual student behavior; however, some administrators and teachers reported that inappropriate conduct by students interfered with classroom instruction.

**Leadership and Governance:**

- The EQA examiners rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on twelve and 'Poor' on four of the sixteen performance indicators in this domain.
- The district articulated a vision that reflected the values of the community and the educational needs of students.
- The most recent improvement plan, beginning in 2001, reflected the district's vision and was linked to student data that impacted changes in educational strategy.
- During the past two and a half years, there was a clear process of developing a school improvement plan that combined the school committee and the superintendent's

priorities with the school council's goals/objectives (School Improvement Plan) into one document. However, the absence of a consistent coding system made it difficult to link all improvement plans.

- The administrators and staff were not held accountable for the implementation of their assigned responsibilities within the improvement plan.
- During the final year of the review period, periodic progress reports to the school committee and community on the improvement plan began to occur.
- The organizational structure emphasized vocational clusters through the cluster administrator and cluster leaders. These positions provided considerable resources to assist students in gaining academic skills within career programs.
- Several school sources indicated that the superintendent communicated a message of school improvement and student achievement to internal and external audiences. A consultant-driven "Leadership Academy" was established in 1999 to develop, among other things, administrative and planning skills to move the district toward a data-driven system to improve student achievement. Although student assessment test data were available, no evidence existed of any significant data analysis used by the district leadership for school improvement until 2001.

**Business and Finance:**

- The EQA examiners rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on seven, 'Poor' on two, and 'Unsatisfactory' on four of the thirteen performance indicators in this domain.
- For the period under review, the district's budget was driven by two main factors: state aid and the required minimum contribution of the member communities. Input from the stakeholders occurred in developing the priorities of the budget. Once the funding source amounts were determined, the input from the stakeholders was adjusted to fit within the available funds.
- For the period under examination, funding levels were not adequate for the implementation of a cluster model.
- The district did not monitor the Health Insurance Trust Fund closely, and did not evidence careful stewardship over this fund.
- The budget document was vague and difficult to understand. Improvements were made but historical trends were explained only in the form of bar graphs with no narrative about significant changes to the budget from year-to-year or from budget projections to the actual budgets.

- For the period under examination, the district's reporting relationship to the school committee regarding the budget and its development was not satisfactory, which resulted in the establishment of an oversight subcommittee in FY2002.
- The reports provided to and used by the school committee in its decision-making process were not always accurate, which resulted in a budget deficit in FY2001.
- The district practiced poor fiscal management. The district did not issue any Revenue Anticipation Notes for operations. It used bond proceeds from the construction project. At the end of FY2002, the general fund of the district owed the construction project \$1.98 million. At the time of the EQA's audit visit, the district still owed \$1 million.

## **Part I: Overview of the EQA Review Process and the District**

On May 19-23 2003, the EQA conducted an independent examination of the Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical High School District for the period between 1999-2002. This examination applied the standards related to the EQA's five major domains of inquiry, which include: A, Assessment and Evaluation; B, Curriculum and Instruction; C, Student Academic Support Services; D, Leadership and Governance; and E, Business and Financial Management. The EQA's examination process for school districts involves two tiers of investigation and utilizes ten standards. The basis of this report is the result of the source documents, correspondence sent prior to the on-site visit, interviews with the representative from the school committee, district leadership team, school administrators, and additional documents submitted while in the district. The report does not include documents, revised data, or comments that may have surfaced after the on-site visit.

The impact of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 and the provisions of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization, as embodied in the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* legislation of 2001, have continued to transform vocational-technical high schools in the Commonwealth. In 1906, Massachusetts was the first state to publicly fund industrial education and become the model for other states and the blueprint to provide Federal funds through the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. The early mission contained an economic and social component to address the need for a skilled workforce to meet the demands of the Industrial Revolution and increase the single digit graduation rate from classical education high schools. Legislation from 1963-1984 reinforced the focus on preparation for high-skilled jobs; added access for the handicapped, at-risk, and adult populations; addressed gender bias in the workplace; and stipulated a closer alignment with general education to enhance post-secondary opportunities. The 1990s emphasized the integration of academic and vocational skills necessary for the new workplace, articulation between secondary and post-secondary education, closer links between schools and work, and program assessment and accountability to raise the level of academic and technical performance.

Both the first-generation of industrial trade schools and the second-generation vocational-technical schools are structured and characterized by their distinctive use of project-based instructional methodology, real-world curriculum, and industry standard facilities and equipment. Time on task is a critical factor in acquiring technical skills and knowledge, but the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 shifted the emphasis away from a time-based approach to a more outcome-oriented approach. The Certificate of Occupational Proficiency (COP) and industry credentialing are currently under development to implement this strategy. The first and second-generation schools differ greatly in their approach to developing the core academic skills. Currently, vocational-technical schools' mission is to educate and prepare students for gainful employment and continuing education. This education would mean post-secondary as well as job-based learning programs. This implies that the scope and rigor of academic courses offered must match those of traditional academic high schools. The organization and scheduling required to achieve both outcomes is clearly challenging and can be highly inconsistent.

Additionally, the student composition of vocational-technical schools has differed from that of academic schools in several important ways. First, vocational-technical students tend to be more focused on career preparation, seek relevancy in their course of study, and are more likely to be experiential learners with strengths in visual and kinesthetic approaches to learning. As a result of teaching styles and strategies employed at middle schools, these 'hands-on' learners enter vocational programs appearing less academically successful or more ill prepared. Second, because of legislative mandates to serve special populations and the societal bias and perception that an occupational-preparatory curriculum is less demanding than a college-preparatory curriculum, vocational-technical schools have, on average, at least twice the special needs student population as found in academic high schools.

Given the dual mission, distinctive structure, and population traits of vocational-technical high schools, the impact of academic standards-based and performance-based graduation requirements has been significant. The highest performing vocational-technical high schools are considered 'Low Performing' when measured by the recently developed MCAS test proficiency index.

The challenges for the leadership of vocational-technical high schools and regional districts are in addressing organizational mission, structure, and institutional culture while managing curriculum alignment, the integration of skills and knowledge, student support services, professional development, evaluation, accountability, gathering political agreement and support, and maintaining fiscal stability. A new generation of “career and technical education” students entering these programs with better academic preparation and skills will assist administrators in addressing these changes. The task for effective leadership will be to orchestrate the institutional changes needed to make these schools and their students more successful.

Greater Lawrence Technical is located in Andover in northwestern Essex County and has four member communities, which include Andover, Lawrence, Methuen, and North Andover. In these four communities, education, healthcare, and social services are the largest sources of employment followed by manufacturing. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Greater Lawrence Technical’s four member communities have a combined population of 174,281 people and an average median family income of \$83,635, while the median family income in Massachusetts is \$71,891. Annually, however, the district draws approximately 92% of its students from the City of Lawrence, which has a median family income of \$31,809. Greater Lawrence Technical has a seven-person school committee comprised of the member communities. According to Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) figures, Greater Lawrence Technical has one school that serves Grades 9-12. The most recent DOE figures indicate that there were 1,311 total students enrolled in the district in FY2002. Also, according to recent Massachusetts DOE data, the demographic/subgroup composition in Greater Lawrence Technical was: 75.5% Hispanic-American; 22.2% White; 1.2% African-American; 1.1% Asian-American; Limited English Proficiency (LEP), 3.1%; Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL/Y), 63.8%; and Special Education (SPED), 13.6%. During the ten years of education reform in Massachusetts, Greater Lawrence Technical’s state Chapter 70 aid increased by 85% from \$7,471,962 in FY1993 to \$13,802,542 in FY2002. For the fiscal years under review, 1999-2002, Greater Lawrence Technical received \$10,794,575; \$11,885,647; \$12,332,578; and \$13,802,543 for a total of \$48,815,343 in state Chapter 70 aid.

This report finds Greater Lawrence Technical to be a ‘Very Low’ performing school district marked by significantly below average student achievement based on its 2002 MCAS results. Since 1999, Greater Lawrence Technical has demonstrated some significant improvement in its MCAS test scores, but in the 2002 administration of the MCAS test, 85.8% of its students scored below standard on the test.

## **Part II: Tier I Analysis of Student Achievement and MCAS Data**

At Tier I, while particular attention was paid to the 2002 MCAS test, the EQA review of Greater Lawrence Technical’s MCAS test results (1999-2002) is framed by the following five essential questions:

- 1. Proficiency/Achievement: To what extent is the MCAS test performance of all of the district’s students meeting or exceeding State proficiency standards?**
- 2. Equity of Achievement: How does MCAS test performance vary among the district’s student subgroups?**
- 3. Improvement: How has MCAS test performance for all students in the district changed over time?**
- 4. Equity of Improvement: How has MCAS test performance for the district’s student subgroups changed over time?**
- 5. Opportunity and Access: Are all eligible students attending and participating in all required programs and assessments?**

In order to determine the extent to which the district’s students performed relative to the five essential questions above, the EQA team analyzed the district’s student performance data on MCAS for all students in Grades 8 (pre-entrance to Greater Lawrence Technical) and 10 between 1999-2002. The EQA analyzed the MCAS student performance data disaggregated by grade levels and by content area (i.e., ELA and math). The MCAS

student performance data was further disaggregated by student status (i.e., regular education, SPED, LEP, and race/ethnicity) and by school. A final review included scores disaggregated by student performance levels.

Due to the fact that all regional vocational-technical schools in the Commonwealth are Grades 9-12 and have no clearly articulated “feeder” schools or programs, a special level of analysis was developed to consider the impact of these schools on student academic performance. Using the unique State Assigned Student Identification Number (SASID), the Grade 10 students who took the 2001 MCAS test were back-mapped and located as Grade 8 students. The 1999 MCAS test results for these Grade 8 students were compared with their results as Grade 10 students. The purpose of this exercise was to determine the level of improvement or increase in performance that participation in the vocational program would or would not promote. These results are discussed below in the section focused on improvement.

The data were then analyzed using three methods: descriptive analysis of the graphs and tables provided by MEC, probability/gap analysis of the distributions of the various performance categories by the individual district, school, and reporting subgroups, and t-tests applied to the distribution of means of each of the various school, district, and subgroup responses to the MCAS test. Four types of t-tests were conducted, as with the proportional analysis: state versus district, state versus state sub-populations, state sub-population versus district sub-population, and district population versus district sub-population. In the two by two matrix, the following results were deemed to be of significance at the 0.95 level of confidence. The information below summarizes these comparisons on the 2002 MCAS test.

**Greater Lawrence Technical vs. Other Vocational Schools in Massachusetts:**

- The aggregate of students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored *lower* than the aggregate of the state's vocational students.
- White students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored *lower* than the state's White vocational students.
- Regular education students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored *lower* than regular education students in the state.
- Special education students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored significantly *lower* than the state's special education students in vocational-technical schools.
- FRL/Y students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored *lower* than the state's FRL/Y students in vocational-technical schools.

**Greater Lawrence Technical's totals vs. Greater Lawrence Technical's subgroups:**

- FRL/Y and Hispanic-American students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored *lower* than all other subgroups at Greater Lawrence Technical except special education students.
- Special education students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored *lower* than all other subgroups at Greater Lawrence Technical.

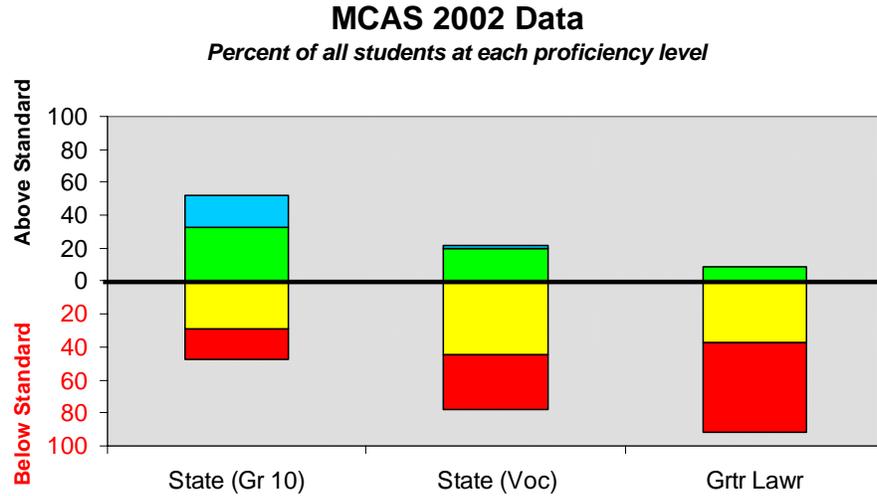
## Assessment of MCAS Results 1999-2002

1. **Proficiency/Achievement:** To what extent is the MCAS performance of all the district's students meeting or exceeding state proficiency standards?

### **Preliminary Finding(s):**

- On the 2002 MCAS test, 91.3% of the students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. This figure was 13.1 percentage points above the state's average percentages for vocational-technical school districts.
  
- On the 2002 MCAS test, in ELA, 87.8% of the students and, in math, 94.6% of the students at Greater Lawrence Technical scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. These figures were 16 percentage points in ELA and 10.1 percentage points in math above the state's average percentage for vocational-technical school districts.

**Figure/Table 1:**



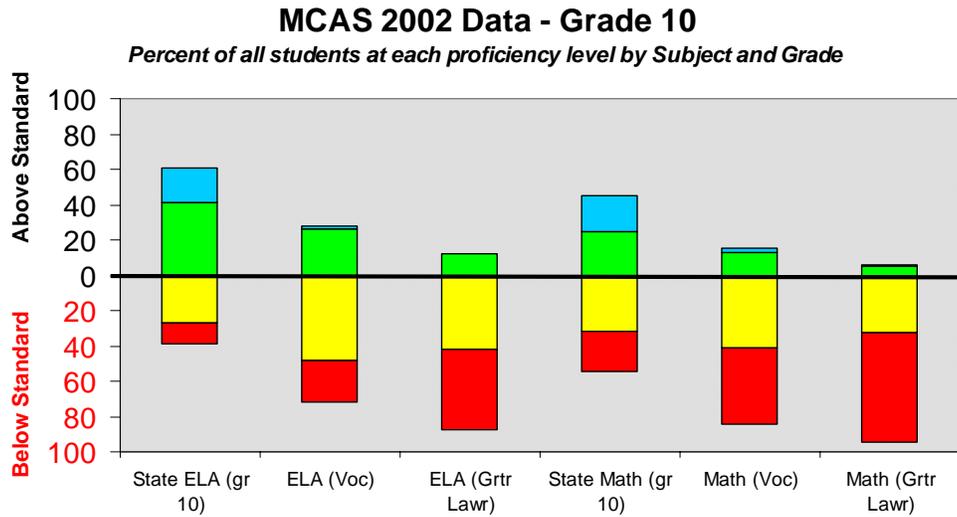
	Advanced	20.2	2.2	0.4
	Proficient	32.3	19.7	8.3
	Needs Improv.	29.2	44.8	37.3
	Warning/Failing	17.9	33.4	54.0

**Analysis of Figure/Table 1:**

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 19.8% and 24% fewer students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories than did the state’s Grade 10 students on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 8.1% and 36.1% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than did the state’s Grade 10 students on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1.8% and 11.4% fewer students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories than did the state’s vocational-technical students on the 2002 MCAS test.

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 7.5% fewer and 20.6% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than did the state’s vocational-technical students on the 2002 MCAS test.

**Figure/Table 2:**



Advanced	19.8	1.8	0.3	20.6	2.5	0.6
Proficient	40.9	26.4	11.9	24.7	13.0	4.9
Needs Improv.	26.8	48.1	41.8	31.4	41.5	32.9
Warning/Failing	12.4	23.7	46.0	23.3	43.0	61.7

**Analysis of Figure/Table 2:**

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 19.5% and 29% fewer of its students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in ELA than did the state’s Grade 10 students on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 15% and 33.6% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in ELA than did the state’s Grade 10 students on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1.5% and 14.5% fewer of its students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in ELA than did the state’s vocational-technical students on the 2002 MCAS test.

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 6.3% fewer and 22.3% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in ELA than did the state’s vocational-technical students on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 20% and 19.8% fewer of its students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in math than did the state’s Grade 10 students on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1.5% and 38.4% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in math than did the state’s Grade 10 students on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1.9% and 8.1% fewer of its students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in math than did the state’s vocational-technical students on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 8.6% fewer and 18.7% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in math than did the state’s vocational-technical students on the 2002 MCAS test.

**Table 3: Proficiency Index (MCAS 2001-2002) Between Vocational Schools**

District	2001	2001	2001	2002	2002	2002
	ELA PI	Math PI	Comb. PI	ELA PI	Math PI	Comb. PI
Norfolk Agric.	89.1	67.4	78.3	83.2	66.8	<b>75.0</b>
Bristol County Agric.	58.4	55.1	56.7	74.7	66.0	<b>70.4</b>
Blackstone Valley Reg.	66.7	65.2	65.9	71.8	65.5	<b>68.7</b>
South Shore RVT	61.1	59.6	60.3	73.2	58.2	<b>65.7</b>
Minuteman Voc. Tech.	68.0	63.4	65.7	71.6	59.4	<b>65.5</b>
Northern Berkshire Voc.	56.5	50.9	53.7	71.0	58.3	<b>64.7</b>
Franklin County	53.9	45.3	49.6	76.1	52.1	<b>64.1</b>
Blue Hills Voc.	66.6	62.7	64.6	68.7	59.2	<b>64.0</b>
Shawsheen Valley Voc.	62.5	52.5	57.5	73.1	51.4	<b>62.3</b>
Tri County	58.5	53.9	56.2	66.5	57.3	<b>61.9</b>
North Shore Reg Voc.	56.8	50.2	53.5	68.2	54.8	<b>61.5</b>
Upper Cape Cod Voc.	50.7	51.9	51.3	68.1	53.0	<b>60.6</b>
Cape Cod Regional Voc.	62.6	53.8	58.2	65.8	51.5	<b>58.7</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>56.1</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>64.8</b>	<b>50.8</b>	<b>57.8</b>
Bristol-Plymouth Voc.	52.9	51.2	52.0	64.5	50.1	<b>57.3</b>
Old Colony RVT	57.0	54.2	55.6	61.8	52.5	<b>57.2</b>
Pathfinder Voc. Tech.	61.3	59.3	60.3	61.9	51.4	<b>56.7</b>
Assabet Valley	56.0	48.5	52.2	66.3	46.5	<b>56.4</b>
Essex Agric. Tech.	54.5	40.9	47.7	65.7	46.5	<b>56.1</b>
Greater Lowell Voc. Tec.	45.8	38.3	42.0	59.2	52.3	<b>55.8</b>
Southern Worcester City	55.8	46.7	51.2	61.9	48.1	<b>55.0</b>
Nashoba Valley Tech.	54.1	47.8	50.9	58.8	50.4	<b>54.6</b>
Northampton-Smith	48.6	48.2	48.4	57.2	50.7	<b>54.0</b>
Montachusett Voc. Tech.	50.0	45.9	48.0	60.3	45.6	<b>53.0</b>
Greater New Bedford	52.8	42.7	47.7	62.1	42.3	<b>52.2</b>
Greater Fall River	56.9	51.5	54.2	56.5	47.1	<b>51.8</b>
Southeastern RVT	50.3	42.3	46.3	58.4	39.9	<b>49.2</b>
Whittier Voc.	43.4	35.1	39.2	56.1	41.8	<b>49.0</b>
Northeast Metro. Voc.	48.3	49.0	48.6	60.8	31.3	<b>46.1</b>
So. Middlesex RVT	43.1	32.2	37.5	53.4	38.0	<b>45.7</b>
<b>Greater Lawrence RVT</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>47.3</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>42.5</b>

**Analysis of Table 3:**

- Greater Lawrence Technical was well below average compared to other vocational-technical schools in Massachusetts on the CPI on both the 2001 and 2002 MCAS tests.
- In 2001, Greater Lawrence Technical's CPI was 16.1 points lower than the CPI average for all vocational-technical schools in Massachusetts.

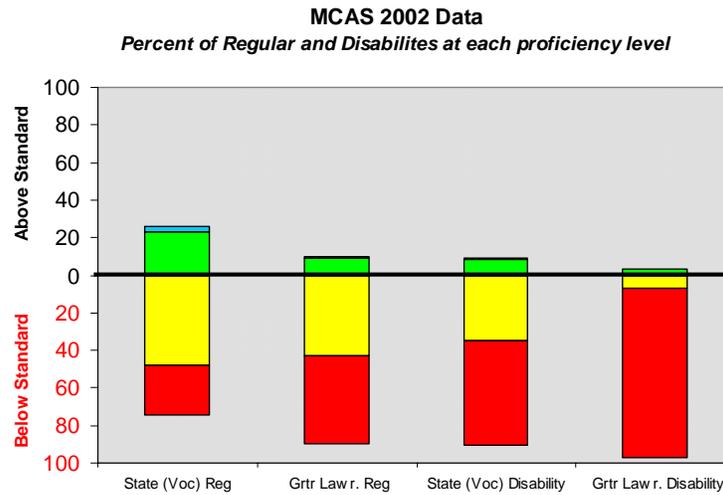
- In 2002, Greater Lawrence Technical's CPI was 15.8 points lower than the CPI average for vocational-technical schools in the state.
- In 2002, Greater Lawrence Technical's ELA and math PIs were 18.2 points and 13.5 points, respectively, lower than the state's PI averages for vocational-technical schools. In both 2001 and 2002, Greater Lawrence Technical was 'Very Low' in all of its PI ratings.
- In 2001 and 2002, Greater Lawrence Technical was the lowest performing vocational-technical school in Massachusetts, according to PI ratings for vocational-technical schools.

**2. Equity of Achievement: How does MCAS performance vary among the district's student subgroups?**

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- On the 2002 MCAS test, 90% of the regular education and 97% of the special education students in Greater Lawrence Technical scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. These figures were 15.6 and 6.3 percentage points above the state's average percentages for these subgroups.
- On the 2002 MCAS test, 93.9% of the FRL/Y students in Greater Lawrence Technical scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. This figure was 7.8 percentage points above the state's average for FRL/Y students.
- On the 2002 MCAS test, FRL/Y and special education students in Greater Lawrence Technical scored 1.6 and 18.2 PI points below the district's average PI.

**Figure/Table 4:**



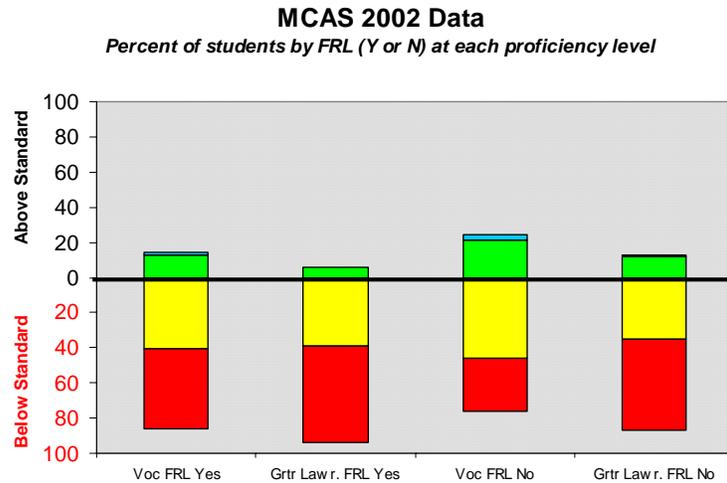
	Advanced	2.6	0.5	0.7	0.0
	Proficient	23.1	9.5	8.5	3.0
	Needs Improv.	47.8	42.7	35.1	7.0
	Warning/Failing	26.6	47.3	55.6	90.0

**Analysis of Figure/Table 4:**

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 2.1% and 13.6% fewer regular education students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories than did the state in that same subgroup in vocational-technical schools on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 5.1% fewer and 20.7% more of its regular education students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than did the state in that same subgroup in vocational-technical schools on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had the 0.7% and 5.5% fewer of its special education students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories than did the state in that same subgroup in vocational-technical schools on the 2002 MCAS test.

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 28.1% fewer and 34.4% more of its special education students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than did the state in that same subgroup at vocational-technical schools on the 2002 MCAS test.

**Figure/Table 5:**



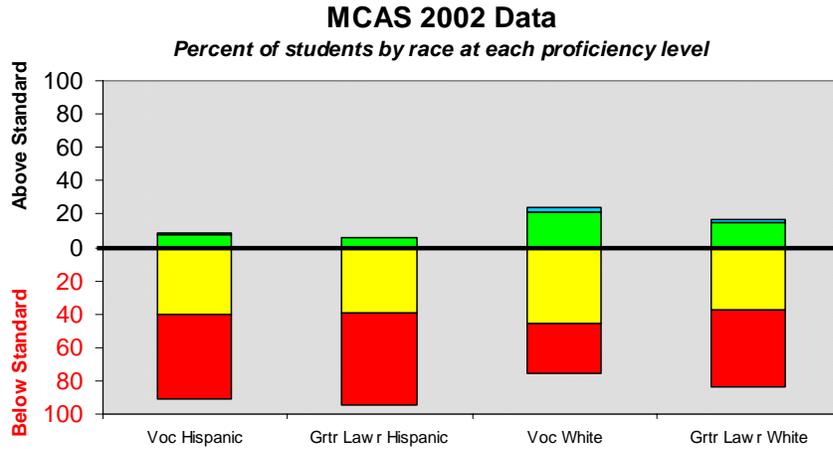
Advanced	1.0	0.0	2.5	1.1
Proficient	13.0	6.1	21.6	11.8
Needs Improv.	40.2	38.7	46.1	35.1
Warning/Failing	45.9	55.2	29.9	52.0

**Analysis of Figure/Table 5:**

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1% and 6.9% fewer of its FRL/Y students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories than did the state’s vocational-technical schools on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1.5% fewer and 9.3% more of its FRL/Y students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than did the state’s vocational-technical schools on the 2002 MCAS test.

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1.4% and 9.8% fewer of its FRL/N students score in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories than did the state's vocational-technical schools on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 11% fewer and 22.1% more of its FRL/N students score in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories than did the state's vocational-technical schools on the 2002 MCAS test.

**Figure/Table 6:**

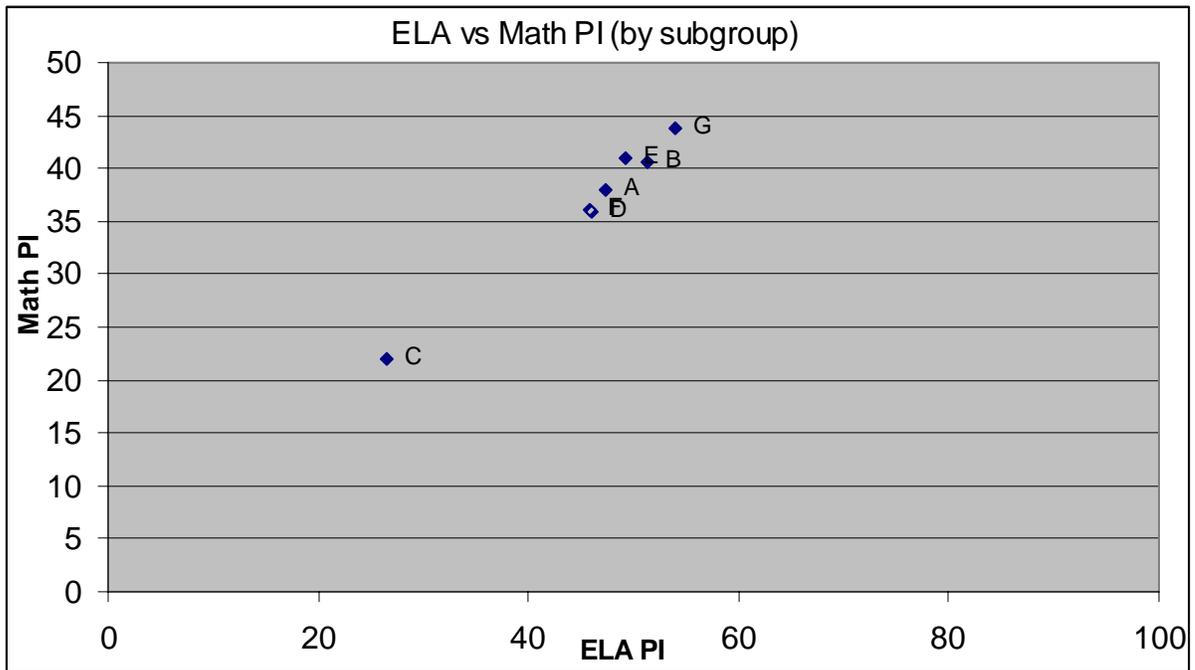


	Advanced	0.5	0.0	2.5	1.5
	Proficient	8.1	5.6	21.6	15.2
	Needs Improv.	40.3	39.1	46.1	37.7
	Warning/Failing	51.0	55.4	29.8	45.7

**Analysis of Figure/Table 6:**

- Greater Lawrence Technical had 0.5% and 2.5% fewer of its Hispanic-American students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories than did the state on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1.2% fewer and 4.4% more of its Hispanic-American students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than did the state on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 1% and 6.4% fewer of its White students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories than did the state on the 2002 MCAS test.
- Greater Lawrence Technical had 8.4% fewer and 15.9% more of its White students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than did the state on the 2002 MCAS test.

**Figure/Table 7:**



		ELA	Math	Average
<b>A</b>	<b>Greater Law Reg Voc.</b>	47.3	37.9	42.5
<b>B</b>	<b>Regular</b>	51.4	40.6	46.0
<b>C</b>	<b>Disability</b>	26.5	22.0	24.3
<b>D</b>	<b>Free Lunch (Y)</b>	46.1	35.9	40.9
<b>E</b>	<b>Free Lunch (N)</b>	49.2	40.9	45.0
<b>F</b>	<b>Hispanic-American</b>	45.8	36.0	40.8
<b>G</b>	<b>White</b>	54.0	43.8	48.9

**Analysis of Figure/Table 7:**

- On average, in Greater Lawrence Technical, the math PI was 9.4 PI points below that for ELA system-wide. The statewide average for this gap was 12.6 PI points.

- In Greater Lawrence Technical, regular education, FRL/N, and White students scored higher on the MCAS test in both ELA and math than did Hispanic-American, FRL/Y, and special education students in the district.

**Table 8:**

**Appendix (n-values by category)**

		<b>ELA</b>	<b>Math</b>
<b>Regular</b>	Advanced	1	2
	Proficient	38	16
	Needs Improv	137	105
	Warning/Failing	106	162
<b>Disability</b>	Proficient	2	1
	Needs Improv	4	3
	Warning/Failing	44	46
<b>LEP</b>	Needs Improv	0	6
	Warning/Failing	5	6
<b>Free Lunch (Y)</b>	Proficient	20	5
	Needs Improv	88	72
	Warning/Failing	96	132
<b>Free Lunch (N)</b>	Advanced	1	2
	Proficient	20	12
	Needs Improv	53	42
	Warning/Failing	59	82
<b>Afr.-American</b>	Advanced	0	1
	Proficient	2	1
	Needs Improv	4	2
	Warning/Failing	4	6
<b>Asian-American</b>	Needs Improv	0	1
	Warning/Failing	1	0
<b>Hispanic-Amer.</b>	Proficient	19	6
	Needs Improv	99	76
	Warning/Failing	101	147
<b>White</b>	Advanced	1	1
	Proficient	14	7
	Needs Improv	27	25
	Warning/Failing	27	36

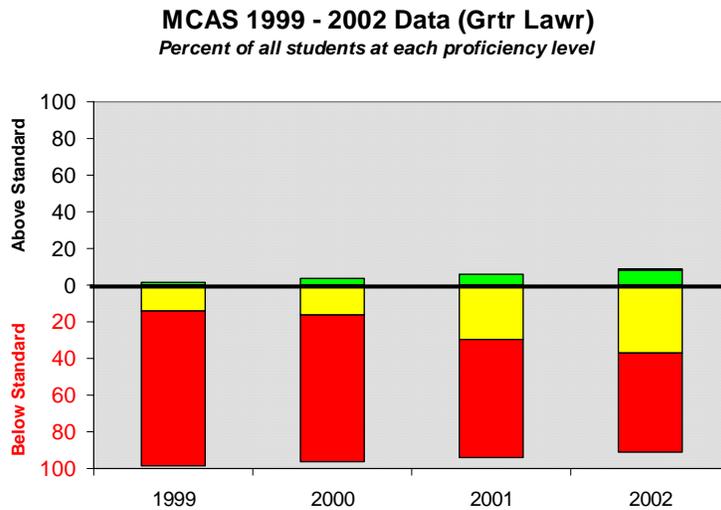
**Analysis of Table 8:** The table above illustrates how Greater Lawrence Technical’s various student subgroups scored on each category of the 2002 MCAS test.

**3. Improvement:** How has MCAS performance for all students in the district changed over time?

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- Between 1999-2002, on the MCAS test in ELA, Greater Lawrence Technical’s EPI rating increased from 33.1 to 47.3.
- Between 1999-2002, on the MCAS test in math, Greater Lawrence Technical’s MPI rating increased from 18.5 to 37.9.

**Figure/Table 9:**

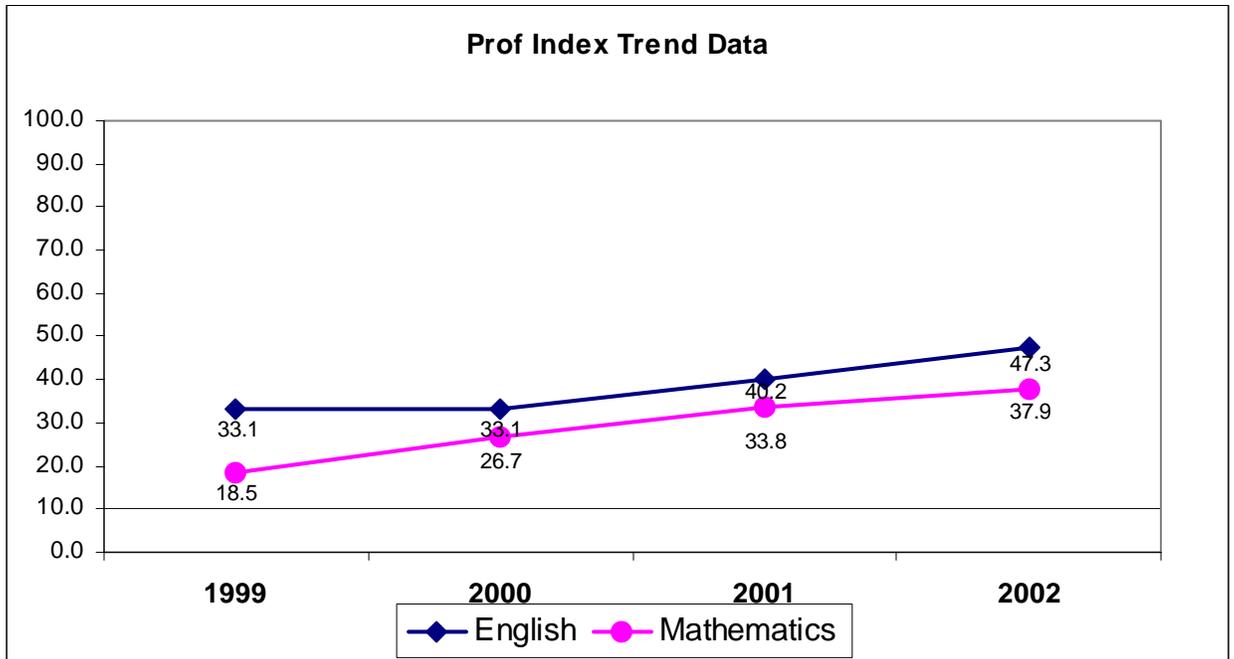


- Between 1999-2002, on the MCAS test Greater Lawrence Technical had 0.2% and 6.9% more of its students score in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories.

- Between 1999-2002, on the MCAS test Greater Lawrence Technical had 22.9% more and 30% fewer of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories.

**Figure 10:**

**Proficiency Index Trend Data MCAS 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002**



**Analysis of Figure 10:**

- Between 1999-2002, on the MCAS test in ELA, Greater Lawrence Technical’s EPI rating increased from 33.1 to 47.3.
- Between 1999-2002, on the MCAS test in math, Greater Lawrence Technical’s MPI rating increased from 18.5 to 37.9.

**Table 10:**

**Proficiency Index Trend Data MCAS 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 (detail)**

	ELA				Math			
	1999	2000	2001	2002	1999	2000	2001	2002
Advanced	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.6
Proficient	1.9	4.6	7.2	11.9	0.9	2.5	4.8	4.9
Needs Improv.	22.6	21.7	36.1	41.8	6.6	10.8	22.8	32.9
Warning/Failing	75.5	73.8	56.7	46.0	92.2	85.9	72.5	61.7

**Analysis of Table 10:**

- Between 1999-2002, in ELA, the number of students in Greater Lawrence Technical that scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories on the MCAS test increased by 0.3 % and 10%.
- Between 1999-2002, in ELA, the number of students in Greater Lawrence Technical that scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ category increased by 19.2% and in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category decreased by 29.5% on the MCAS test.
- Between 1999-2002, in math, the number of students in Greater Lawrence Technical that scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories on the MCAS test increased by 0.3 % and 4%.
- Between 1999-2002, in math, the number of students in Greater Lawrence Technical that scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories on the MCAS test increased by 26.3% and decreased by 30.5%.

**Table 11:**

**Value added comparison of Grade 8 and 10 MCAS test results**

	Average Scaled Score		Average PI	
	2000	2002	2000	2002
ELA (n=279)	225	224	50.7	48.1
Math (n=289)	208	220	12.0	37.8

**Analysis of Table 11:**

- This table summarizes results from the student matching for Greater Lawrence Technical regarding 2002 Grade 10 MCAS test scores and 2000 Grade 8 MCAS scores. For Greater Lawrence, 333 students took both the ELA and math portions of the 2002 MCAS test. The district's 279 students were matched with their Grade 8 ELA scores. The same 279 students scored 2.6 points lower or had an average scaled score of 224 versus 225 when they were in the Grade 8 in 2000.
- In math, however, 289 students that were matched with their Grade 8 scores increased their scaled scores by an average of 18 points. This increase raised their proficiency index rating in math by 25.8 proficiency index points.

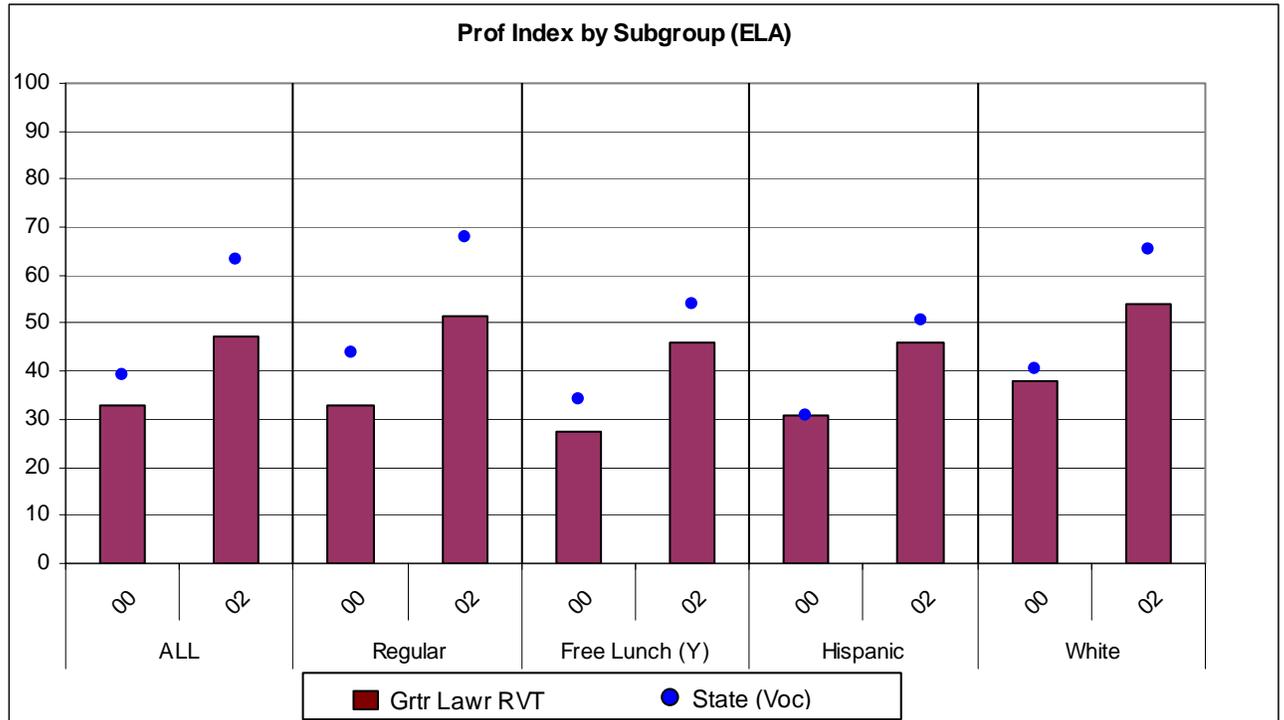
**4. Equity of Improvement: How has MCAS performance for the district's student subgroups changed over time?**

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

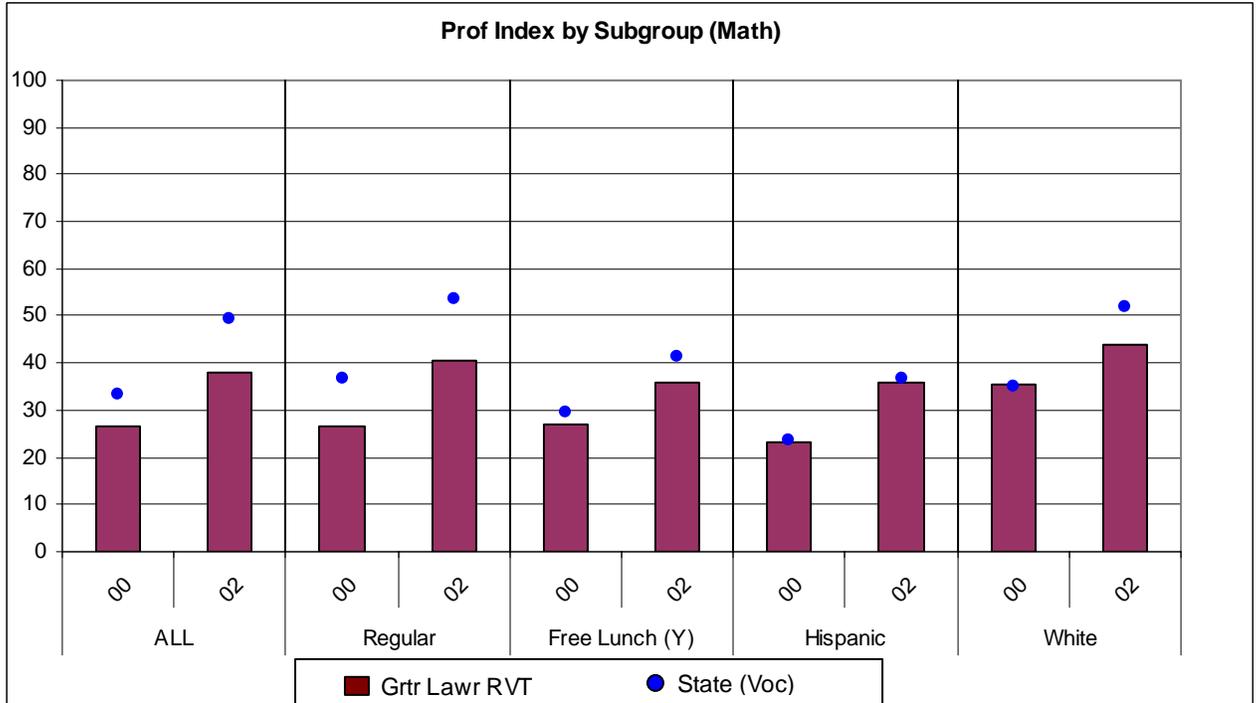
- Between 2000-2002, the subgroups in Greater Lawrence Technical experienced significant increases in their ELA and math PI ratings. For example, in some instances subgroups such as FRL/Y, Hispanic-American, regular education, and White students improved their MCAS test results by as much as 18.6 and 12.6 PI points within three years.

**Tables 12A-B:**

**A.**



**B.**



**Table 13:**

**Proficiency Index Trend Data (by subgroup) MCAS 2000, 2001, and 2002**

**Trend Data by Subgroup (Grtr. Lawr RVT)**

		<b>ELA</b>	<b>Math</b>
<b>ALL</b>	'00	33.1	26.7
	'02	47.3	37.9
<b>Regular</b>	'00	33.1	26.4
	'02	51.4	40.6
<b>Free Lunch (Y)</b>	'00	27.5	27.0
	'02	46.1	35.9
<b>Hispanic-Am.</b>	'00	30.6	23.4
	'02	45.8	36.0
<b>White</b>	'00	37.9	35.3
	'02	54.0	43.8

**Trend Data by Subgroup (State, VOC)**

		<b>ELA</b>	<b>Math</b>
<b>ALL</b>	'00	39.2	33.4
	'02	63.1	49.5
<b>Regular</b>	'00	43.8	36.9
	'02	67.9	53.4
<b>Free Lunch (Y)</b>	'00	34.1	29.5
	'02	54.1	41.4
<b>Hispanic-Am.</b>	'00	30.8	23.6
	'02	50.5	36.5
<b>White</b>	'00	40.3	35.0
	'02	65.4	52.1

**Analysis of Table 13:** The table above illustrates how the district's various student subgroups scored according to the Proficiency Index on the 2000-2002 MCAS tests.

- Between 2000-2002, the subgroups in Greater Lawrence Technical experienced significant increases in their ELA and math PI ratings. For example, in some instances subgroups such as FRL/Y, Hispanic-American, Regular education, and White students improved their MCAS test results by as much as 18.6 and 12.6 points within three years. However, despite these increases subgroups at Greater Lawrence Technical generally rated lower than the state's subgroups during the same period.

**5. Participation and Access: Are all eligible students attending and participating in all required programs and assessments?**

**Preliminary Finding(s)/ Analysis of Table 13:**

- On the 2002 MCAS test, Greater Lawrence Technical’s student test participation rates in ELA and math were 90.74% and 93.73%, respectively. These figures were both below the state’s expectation as set forth in the M.G.L. Chapter 69, section 1D and 1I, and the federal *No Child Left Behind* 95% standard for test participation, which will become effective in 2002-2003.

**Table 14:**

	English	Mathematics
Tested	90.74%	93.73%
NTA	1.09%	0.82%
NTO	8.17%	5.45%

**Table 15:**

**N-values for Tested, NTA (Not Tested, Absent) and NTO (Not Tested, Other) by Student Status**

		English	Mathematics
Tested	Regular	280	283
	Disability	48	49
	LEP	5	12
NTA	Regular	2	2
	Disability	2	1
	LEP	0	0
NTO	Regular	18	15
	Disability	1	1
	LEP	11	4

## Part III: Summary and Preliminary Findings by Domain

### Domain A. Assessment and Evaluation

Standards ▼ Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
<b>Domain A – Assessment &amp; Evaluation</b>									
<b>S1 - Student Assessment</b>									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	N/A	5
Poor	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	N/A	2
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
<b>S2 – Evaluation</b>									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory	0	0	0	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
Poor	1	1	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0

**Standard 1. Student Assessment:** District administrators and teachers regularly assess the performance of their students relative to state and local student performance standards, and analyze aggregate and individual assessment results to review and improve curricula, instructional practices and supplementary remedial programs. The district regularly employs criteria-referenced tests, norm-referenced tests and other standardized tests in addition to MCAS to assess student progress.

**Preliminary Findings:**

- For the time period under examination (1999-2002), the district demonstrated that administrators and some teachers were provided with training to analyze aggregate and individual test results in order to improve curricula and instructional practices.
- The district did not meet the state participation standard of 95% for all students tested in ELA, with the exception of 1999 (95%). During the last four years (1999-2002), the district did not meet the state participation rate of 95% for all students tested in math, with the exception of 1999, which was 96%.

**Indicator 1.** The district has clear assessment policies and procedures. Administrators and teachers are well informed about the content and purposes of the assessment programs.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with district-level administrators and a review of the district's documentation indicated that the district used the Iowa test for incoming Grade 8 students to determine placement. The district's admissions requirements relied on reading aptitude, reading levels, and ELA and math data for the MCAS test.

**Indicator 2.** Administrators and teachers demonstrate that they have the skills to analyze aggregate and individual test results to improve curricula, instructional practices, and develop targeted support and remedial programs.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** A consultant with Center for Resource (CRM) worked with the staff of the math, English, social studies, science, and Title I departments during the school year 1999-2000 and in the summer of 2002 to achieve these objectives. These staff members receive training and data collection and analysis targeted towards improving student performance.

**Indicator 3.** Administrators, teachers, students, and parents are well informed of the content, purposes, and benefits of the assessment program.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The evidence indicated that assessment information was communicated to staff through regular staff meetings. Parents were made aware of assessment programs through parent nights and written communications, such as the student handbook, newsletters, and the school's website.

**Indicator 4.** The district’s schools consistently use the results of the MCAS test, other standardized test results, and classroom teacher assessments to improve the curricula and quality of instruction.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The evidence indicated that the district used the results of the MCAS, Iowa, and the Stanford tests as well as teacher-generated assessments to improve the curricula and quality of instruction. District-level administrators worked with academic instructors to review assessment results.

**Indicator 5.** The district focuses on the participation and the assessment results of all student population sub-groups: minority students, special needs, limited English proficient, and participants in free lunch programs.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** Interviews with administrators and a review of the district’s documentation indicated that the school did not meet the state participation standard of 95% (M.G.L. Chapter 69, section 1D and 1I) for all students tested in ELA, with the exception of 1999 (95%). During the last four years (1999-2002), the school did not meet the state participation rate of 95% for all students tested in math, with the exception of 1999 (96%).

**Indicator 6.** The district pays particular attention to the participation and assessment results of all subgroups: regular education students, minority students, students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** The district reviewed the participation and assessment results of its subgroups. However, the evidence indicated that the school did not meet the state participation standard of 95% (M.G.L. Chapter 69, section 1D and 1I) for all students tested in ELA, with the exception of 1999 (95%). During the last four years (1999-2002), the school did

not meet the state participation rate of 95% for all students tested in math, with the exception of 1999, which was 96%.

**Indicator 7.** Classroom assessment standards and practices are linked with the state curriculum frameworks' standards. The district regularly disseminates assessment analyses to appropriate staff.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The evidence indicated that classroom assessment standards and practices were linked with the learning standards articulated in the state curriculum frameworks. The district disseminated assessment analyses to staff at regular intervals.

**Standard 2. Evaluation:** The district employs a system of school, program, and personnel evaluation that focuses on accountability and the improvement of student achievement. There is an ongoing process to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction and to implement strategies and action plans to improve leadership, instruction, and student performance.

**Preliminary Findings:**

- For the time period under examination, the district's personnel evaluations were not current.
- The district did not have a systematic evaluation process that coordinated student assessment data, program, and personnel performance evaluation data.

**Indicator 1.** The district regularly engages in an evaluation process at all levels that coordinates student assessment data, program, and personnel performance evaluation results. The district incorporates pertinent findings and recommendations from all external evaluations.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** Interviews with department heads, teachers, and district personnel and a review of the district's documentation indicated that while the district collected assessment data, program and personnel evaluation results, these results were not coordinated in any systematic manner.

**Indicator 2.** The district formulates strategies to improve leadership, instruction, and student performance as needs arise from evaluations.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** A random selection of 28 files of teachers with professional status determined that only five had evaluations that were completed during the past two years. Of the 28 files that were examined, 20 contained evaluations. Evaluations were not conducted in a timely manner, so the district could not have used evaluations to help determine strategies to improve leadership, instruction, and student performance.

**Indicator 3.** Through its evaluation system, the district consistently monitors the quality and effectiveness of existing programs and holds administrators and schools accountable for student performance and improvement.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** The district's documentation indicated that with the exception of the Grade 9 exploratory program, the district did not consistently monitor the quality and effectiveness of existing programs. The district's administrative contracts did not mention accountability for student performance and enhancing student improvement.

**Indicator 4.** The district and each school annually evaluate the accomplishments of established goals and discontinue or change ineffective initiatives.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with department heads, teachers and district personnel and a review of the district's documentation indicated that the district participated in *High*

*Schools That Work* and annually evaluated progress made in meeting the goals established in their *High Schools That Work* plan.

**Domain B. Curriculum and Instruction**

<b>Standards ▼ Indicators ►</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Domain B – Curriculum &amp; Instruction</b>									
<b>S3 – Curriculum</b>									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	6
Poor	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>S4 - Professional Development</b>									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory	0	0	1	1	1	0	N/A	N/A	3
Poor	1	1	0	0	0	1	N/A	N/A	3
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0

**Standard 3. Curriculum:** The district and each of its schools have an academically sound, documented curriculum that prepares students to meet state learning standards. All teachers have complete curriculum guides that are aligned with the state curriculum frameworks and the local curriculum and are trained in their use. A regular analysis of student assessment data provides a sound basis for review and revision of the curriculum and the development of the district budget and the district, school, and individual improvement plans

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- For the period of time under examination, the district had a comprehensive district curriculum in place.
- The district had a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan in place that contained all of the required components; however, the success rate for all student populations did not improve.

**Indicator 1.** The district has developed functional, high quality curriculum guides in all content areas that include the requisite information.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with department heads, teachers and district personnel, and a review of the district's documentation indicated that the district's curriculum guides contained a rationale, cross-references to the state curriculum frameworks, a scope and sequence document, and suggested materials and activities. The curriculum guides, also contained measurable learner objectives and methods for assessment.

**Indicator 2.** Every teacher has full access to the curriculum guides, is trained in their use, and employs them in the classroom.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district's documentation indicated that staff received training in the use of the curriculum guides, and every teacher had access to the curriculum guides.

**Indicator 3.** There is a comprehensive District Curriculum Articulation Plan that addresses the diverse student learning needs. The curriculum is modified to increase the success rate of all populations, including ELL, vocational education students, and students with disabilities.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** The evidence indicated that the district had a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan that addressed each of the required components, and the curriculum was modified periodically. However, the district did not increase the success rate of all subgroups for the period of time under review. (It should be noted, however, that on the spring 2003 MCAS test retakes, all but approximately 12 students passed the test.)

**Indicator 4.** The district has a process involving teachers in the annual review and revision of curriculum.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with district administrators and a review of the curriculum indicated that courses in Algebra I, II, and geometry had been revised since 1999. Further revisions in Algebra I were planned for the summer of 2003. The Grades 9 and 10 curricula in ELA were revised since 1999. The revisions to the Grade 12 ELA curriculum were planned for the summer of 2003.

**Indicator 5.** A curriculum leader guides every school in the district.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with cluster leaders, administrators and teachers, and a review of the district's documentation indicated that the district's curriculum leadership was a shared responsibility between the director of cluster academies and the curriculum coordinator.

**Indicator 6.** Instructional time in each content area meets the state requirements and the educational needs of students as determined through an analysis of student performance.

**EQA rating: Unsatisfactory**

**Evidence:** The evidence indicated that while the instructional time in each content area met the state's requirements, student performance results indicated that the instructional needs of students were not being met.

**Indicator 7.** Funding levels are realistic for adequate staffing, professional development, textbooks, instructional materials, and equipment.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with cluster leaders, administrators and teachers, and a review of the district’s documentation indicated that funding levels were realistic for adequate staffing, professional development, textbooks, and instructional materials during the period under review.

**Indicator 8.** Instructional program articulation exists across Grades PreK-12 and is aligned with the state curriculum frameworks.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** EQA interviews and the district’s documentation indicated that the articulation of math and ELA was done at monthly department meetings. Also, to further ensure articulation, each math and ELA teacher taught in every grade level, each year

**Standard 4. Professional Development:** Administrators and teacher in the district collaboratively develop professional development programs and activities that will increase their knowledge and skills and the quality of the learning environment of students. The school committee and the community demonstrate support of sound professional development programs as vital to school reform and improvement of student learning.

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- For the period of time under review, teachers were not directly involved in the development of the district’s professional development plan.

**Indicator 1.** The district has implemented a professional development plan based on the analysis of student assessment, MCAS test data, district and school improvement plans, observations, and program evaluations.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** The evidence indicated that for the time under review, the district lacked a professional development plan based on the analysis of student assessments, MCAS test

data, district and school improvement plans, formal teacher observations, and program evaluations. However, district level administrators reported that professional development had improved over the past few years.

**Indicator 2.** Teachers are involved in planning the professional development program.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** The district offered a Leadership Academy that involved classroom teachers, department chairpersons, and cluster leaders in designing, planning, and implementing its in-service programs, summer institutes, and course offerings. However, interviews with district personnel and a review of the district's documentation indicated that teachers had little input on the development of the district's professional development plan.

**Indicator 3.** The district and schools assist teachers to identify professional development needs and facilitate access to in-service programs, university courses, and professional conferences.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The documentation and evidence indicated that the district assisted teachers in identifying their needs through the Individual Professional Plans and provided access to in-service programs, university, and professional conferences.

**Indicator 4.** Administrators and teachers enroll in courses that are directly related to their assignments.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with cluster leaders, administrators and teachers, and a review of the district's documentation indicated that building administrators assisted teachers in identifying courses that were directly related to their assignments as well as school improvement goals. A district level administrator approved the initial requests, and then the superintendent/director had the final authorization.

**Indicator 5.** Administrators and teachers take an active part in professional organizations and committees that relate to improving education in the district.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with administrators, cluster leaders, and teachers, and a review of the district's documentation indicated that teachers and administrators took an active part in professional organizations.

**Indicator 6.** The district offers incentives to staff for continued professional development and training. The professional development plan is assessed annually to ensure that the most useful and beneficial programs are included.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** The documentation and evidence indicated that the district offered incentives to staff for continued professional development. Additionally, the district provided no-cost options for re-certification. Since the district had not instituted an annual review of its professional plan, there was no evidence that the programs that they provided were beneficial to the district.

**Domain C: Student Academic and Support Services**

Standards▼ Indicators▶	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
<i>Domain C – Student Academic Support Services</i>									
<b>S5 - Academic Support Services</b>									
Excellent	0	NA	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	NA	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	5
Poor	0	NA	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Unsatisfactory	0	NA	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
<b>S6 - Participation, Safety, &amp; Discipline</b>									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	6
Poor	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Standard 5. Academic Support Services:** The district provides academic support services in all core content areas for students who are not meeting grade level performance expectations. A comprehensive analysis of results from student performance assessments determines the content and scope of support services that are offered.

**Preliminary finding(s):**

- For the period under examination, the district had a comprehensive support services program for students not meeting grade-level proficiency; however, MCAS test data indicated that all students were not performing at grade-level proficiency.

**Indicator 1.** The district uses data from classroom teachers and standardized tests for Grades K-12 to identify students who are not meeting grade level performance expectations and provides them with supplementary and remedial services.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with administrators, cluster leaders, and teachers, and a review of the district’s documentation indicated that beginning at the Grade 9, the district used data available from classroom teachers and standardized tests to identify students who were not meeting grade- level expectations and provided them with supplementary/remedial

services. Students in Grade 9 participated in an exploratory program for six periods a day and received one period of math and reading instruction to help bridge the gap between academic and vocational weeks. Students were scheduled into small classes for approximately eight to ten students to work with a reading/language arts teacher for one period followed by one period with a math teacher. The district offered a Plan for Achieving Student Success (PASS) Program. The district, in a review of student data, found that students who entered Grade 9 and failed two or more core academic subjects were more likely to fail the MCAS test and drop out of school. Therefore, students in Grade 9 who failed two or more subjects were mandated to stay after school two days per week to participate in a program that re-teaches the material that was failed. Evidence existed that this program has been evaluated to determine its effectiveness and efficiency.

**Indicator 2.** Early intervention reading programs are provided at the primary level to ensure that all students are at the proficiency level on the MCAS test at the end of Grade 3.

**EQA rating:** N/A (The district serves students in Grades 9-12 only.)

**Evidence:** N/A

**Indicator 3.** The district has developed a well-staffed, comprehensive support services program at all levels to address the needs of under-performing students.

**EQA rating:** Satisfactory

**Evidence:** The evidence indicated that the district had a well-staffed student support program to address the needs of under-performing students. Under the supervision of a director of pupil personnel services, the district developed a program of services through comprehensive staffing in special education, guidance, Title I, and services for English language learners.

**Indicator 4.** The district has allocated funds for each of its schools to initiate and implement these programs.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with administrators, cluster leaders, and teachers, and a review of the district's documentation indicated that the district allocated funds to initiate and implement programs and support services.

**Indicator 5.** The district successfully applies for all eligible federal and state grants.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district's documentation indicated that the district sought and acquired supplemental funding and grants from federal and state agencies.

**Indicator 6.** District policies and practices conform to the requirements of the Education Reform Act and provide services for under-performing students.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with administrators, cluster leaders, and teachers and a review of the district's documentation indicated that the district provided services for under-performing students in compliance with the Massachusetts Education Reform Act.

**Standard 6. Participation, Safety, and Discipline:** The district has documented attendance, absenteeism, mobility, retentions, dropouts, codes of conduct and school safety practices and ensures consistent and effective implementation in all district schools. Codes of conduct and school safety rules are reviewed with all students and made available to parents and other interested parties. The staffs stress that in order to succeed, students must be present, participate, and have a safe learning environment, all must share responsibility to achieve that goal.

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- For the period of time under review, it was evident that the district monitored individual student behavior; however, some administrators and teachers reported that inappropriate conduct by students interfered with classroom instruction.

**Indicator 1.** The district ensures that all its schools have a clear, written code of conduct and expectations for attendance, participation in programs, retention, and promotion, including a process for resolving student conflicts that is communicated to all staff and students.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district had a clear written code of conduction and clear expectations regarding programs, retention, and promotion. Attendance counselors monitored student attendance, and students with outstanding attendance were recognized. The deans of discipline ensured an orderly environment and met with parents, teachers, guidance counselors, attendance counselors, school nurses, psychologists, principals, and administrators as needed. In Greater Lawrence Technical, cultivating good citizens was one of the goals of the district.

**Indicator 2.** The district ensures that behavioral problems in each of its schools do not interfere with instructional and learning time.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** Interviews with administrators, cluster leaders, and teachers and a review of the district's documentation indicated that despite a systemic effort to curb misbehavior, behavioral problems interfered with instructional and learning time.

**Indicator 3.** Schools have well-documented and well-planned programs to encourage attendance and participation.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** The district's documentation and evidence indicated that although the district had a well-documented and well-coordinated program to encourage attendance, the district's attendance rate was well below the state average. In 1998, the district's attendance rate was 81%, and the state average was 94%. In 1999, the district's attendance rate was 87%, and the state average was 94%. In 2000, the district's attendance rate was 89%, and the state average was 94%. In 2001, the district's rate was 89%, and the state average was 94%.

**Indicator 4.** The district tracks students who have ceased to participate in school programs and provides them and their families with information and assistance to return to school.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The EQA's interviews and the district's documentation indicated that the district had practices and procedures that enabled it to track students who had ceased to participate in school programs and provided them and their families with information and assistance to return to school. These practices were administered through the offices of the deans of attendance and guidance.

**Indicator 5.** The district maintains accurate records on attendance, suspension, discipline, and dropouts and analyzes these records to improve participation and involvement of all students

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The evidence indicated that the district maintained accurate records on attendance, suspensions, discipline, and dropouts. The analysis of this data took place at regular intervals and was communicated to the staff.

**Indicator 6.** Safety procedures within schools are well understood and practiced regularly.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews and the district's documentation indicated that safety procedures within schools were well understood and practiced regularly.

**Indicator 7.** The district makes a concerted effort to involve parents in the discipline of their children.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with administrators, cluster leaders, and teachers, and a review of the district's documentation indicated that the district made an effort to involve parents in the discipline of their children. Procedures governing infractions required that letters be sent home to the parents. The procedure also dictated that no expelled students be re-admitted without the school first meeting with the parents.

**Indicator 8.** The district works cooperatively with other municipal groups and agencies to insure the safety and participation of all students in schools and in the community at large.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district’s documentation indicated that the district worked cooperatively with other municipal groups and agencies to insure the safety and participation of all students in schools and in the community.

**Domain D: Leadership and Governance**

Standards ▼	Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
<b>Domain D – Leadership &amp; Governance</b>										
<b>S7 - Vision and Planning</b>										
	Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Satisfactory	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	5
	Poor	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
	Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>S8 - Organizational Structures, Policies &amp; Practices</b>										
	Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Satisfactory	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	7
	Poor	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Standard 7. Vision and Planning:** The district and each of its schools have clear, credible, and academically sound improvement plans that are based on a detailed analysis of student performance data and reflect the District Vision Statement. The results achieved through implementation of these plans are shared annually with the staff, school committee, and community.

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- The district articulated a vision that reflected the values of the community and the educational needs of students.
- The most recent improvement plan, beginning in 2001, reflected the district vision and was linked to student data that impacted changes in educational strategy.
- During the past two and a half years, there was a clear process of developing a school improvement plan that combined the school committee and the superintendent’s priorities with the school council’s goals/objectives (School Improvement Plan) into

one document. However, the absence of a consistent coding system made it difficult to link all improvement plans.

- The administrators and staff were not held accountable for the implementation of their assigned responsibilities within the improvement plan.
- During the final year of the review period, periodic progress reports to the school committee and community on the improvement plan began to occur.

**Indicator 1.** The leaders in the district have articulated a vision that reflects the values of the community and the educational needs of students.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** A review of the documentation indicated that the leaders of the school district articulated a vision that reflected the values of the community and the educational needs of the students.

**Indicator 2.** The vision is effectively communicated to all stakeholders and implemented in all district and school planning.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district's vision was found in the school improvement plan and reflected the school's commitment to higher achievement, community partnerships, technical competence, as well as prepared the diverse student population for careers, higher education, and responsible citizenship.

**Indicator 3.** The district and its schools have an inclusive, comprehensive planning process.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Based on documents provided and interviews conducted with the superintendent, principal, and other administrators, the district/school improvement planning process began during the 1999-2000 school year. The district/school utilized a *High Schools That Work* technical assistance visit in November 1999, as well as staff, student, and parent surveys in 2001, to identify strengths and weaknesses.

**Indicator 4.** The District Improvement Plan (DIP) and the School Improvement Plans (SIP) reflect the District Vision and are linked to the analysis of student data that drives development, implementation, and change of educational strategy.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** During interviews with the superintendent, principal, staff, and school committee, all parties expressed a commitment to higher academic achievement in programs and for students. However, the linkage between the school vision, improvement planning, and the analysis of student data only began to impact educational change during the 2001-2002 school year.

**Indicator 5.** Based on an analysis of student performance assessments, administrators and staff evaluate progress on the DIP and SIP goals of each school. Necessary changes are made.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** One of the district's key initiatives in the School Improvement Plan was the support of the cluster model. The district made efforts to work with the teachers' union to establish five cluster leaders. The district also created the administrative position of director of cluster academies.

**Indicator 6.** Job accountabilities are established for the administrators and teachers in implementing the goals in district and school action plans.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** Through the document review and interviews with administrators, the superintendent evaluated the principal's efforts in coordinating the School Improvement Plan with a rating of 'exceeds standards.' However, no evidence was found that established administrator or teacher job accountability for school improvement goals. However, administrators, cluster leaders, and department chairpersons were required by the principal to link new budget initiatives and supplemental expenditures to a specific goal/objective or action item within the improvement plan.

**Indicator 7.** The district provides annual accountability and progress reports on district and school plans to the school committee and community.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** During the latter years of the review period, the district did provide periodic progress reports on the School Improvement Plan to the school committee and the community. However this was not the case during the entire period under review.

**Indicator 8.** The school committee is highly involved in the planning process and gives high priority to the goals of the district and school improvement plans in the annual budget.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** It was clear that the school committee, superintendent, principal, and the school council were involved in the development, review, and approval of school improvement planning. According to school committee members, an informal link existed between the budget process and the school improvement plan.

**Standard 8. Organizational Structures, Policies, and Practices:** The district has an organizational structure that has clear lines of authority and responsibility, promotes efficient operations, and facilitates accomplishment of the goals of the district and schools to improve student achievement. An on going analysis of student performance

data and the improvement of the curriculum and instruction are the focal points of the district leadership.

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- The organizational structure emphasized vocational clusters through the cluster administrator and cluster leaders. These positions provided considerable resources to assist students in gaining academic skills within career programs.
- Several school sources indicated that the superintendent communicated a message of school improvement and student achievement to internal and external audiences. A consultant-driven “Leadership Academy” was established in 1999 to develop, among other things, administrative and planning skills to move the district toward a data-driven system to improve student achievement. Although student assessment test data were available, no evidence existed of any significant data analysis used by the district leadership for school improvement until 2001.

**Indicator 1.** The superintendent, in meetings with senior administrators and members of the school committee, develops a coherent vision statement and District Improvement Plan (DIP) designed to achieve it.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The evidence revealed that the superintendent met with senior administrators bi-monthly and bi-monthly with the school committee. Both groups cited the superintendent as a frequent spokesperson for increasing of student achievement.

**Indicator 2.** The superintendent delegates the educational and operational management of the schools to the building principals.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The superintendent clearly delegated the educational management of the school to the principal. This was revealed in the EQA’s meetings with the principal,

administrators, supervisors, and teachers where these officials made specific reference to the principal's responsibility for the school's daily operation and for executing the School Improvement Plan.

**Indicator 3.** The district leadership ensures that all principals have an opportunity to discuss published policies and district improvement plans. The district uses system-wide and inter-site communication systems to keep all staff well informed and to provide avenues for response.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Several modes of communications were used to discuss policies, including the "Reggie Report" a student newsletter, "From the superintendent-director," memoranda, public address announcements, and the school's website, which all emphasized student achievement and greater academic success.

**Indicator 4.** The district publishes and makes available to all staff a current organizational chart that indicates lines of responsibility and job descriptions.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** Interviews reported that in the superintendent's absence, uncertainty existed with the principal and the assistant superintendent of budget/finance regarding the authority and chain of command. The job descriptions for personnel in the organizational chart were found in individual personnel files. But the organizational chart approved by the school committee was not approved until January 2002 (the later period under review).

**Indicator 5.** The district ensures that all district records are carefully compiled and maintained and are available to all.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district kept careful and accurate records, and this information was available through the superintendent's office.

**Indicator 6.** The superintendent is evaluated annually using the District Improvement Plan (DIP) as one set of criteria and receives a written report that identifies strengths and weaknesses. This report serves as a basis for subsequent improvement goals and professional development plans.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The school committee gave a commendation to the superintendent in his 2002 evaluation for establishing a strategic plan that was connected to the School Improvement Plan.

**Indicator 7.** School leaders organize the structure and schedules of their schools such that instructional practices are improved.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** A prescribed schedule for administrators, department chairpersons, and individual department meetings was present in the Annual School Calendar. The evidence for this was also found during interviews with the staff. In addition, it was clear that through regular meetings that these schedules and structures were revised to improve the delivery of services and instruction.

**Indicator 8.** District employment policies and practices encourage skilled personnel to remain in the district's employment.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district's employment policies and practices encouraged skilled personnel to remain within the district's employment. This was evidenced by feedback offered the senior staff and low turnover figures among personnel data. Teachers' salaries were slightly higher than the state average. The cluster leaders gave some additional support to

new vocational-technical instructors by providing these teachers with a ‘mock’ evaluation prior to the actual evaluation. Cluster leaders were part of the teacher union and were not permitted by contract to evaluate other teachers.

**Domain E: Business and Financial Management**

Standards ▼ Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
<b>Domain E – Business &amp; Financial Management</b>									
<b>S9 - Budget Planning &amp; Development</b>									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory	0	1	0	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	2
Poor	1	0	0	0	0	1	N/A	N/A	2
Unsatisfactory	0	0	1	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	2
<b>S10 - Financial Accounting &amp; Reporting</b>									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	N/A	5
Poor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	N/A	2

**Greater Lawrence Technical’s Chapter 70 Funding and Net School Spending**

**FY1993 to 2003:** For the 11-year period since the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, FY1993 to FY2003, Greater Lawrence did not meet the state mandated Net School Spending requirement in fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2002, and 2003. For the period between FY1993 and FY2003, Chapter 70 Aid to Greater Lawrence increased 89.6% (from \$7,471,962 to \$14,163,663.) Greater Lawrence’s Required Local Contribution increased 26% (from \$4,128,205 to \$5,199,137.) However, Greater Lawrence’s Actual Local Contribution to meet the Net School Spending Requirement for the same time period decreased 30.7% (from \$7,471,962 to \$5,178,661.) For the period since the Education Reform Act, Greater Lawrence received a total of \$115,213,405 in Chapter 70 Aid and was required to raise locally \$53,852,122. From 1999 to 2002, Chapter 70 Aid was \$48,815,343 and the required local contribution was \$20,364,556. For the period between FY1993 and FY2003, Greater Lawrence’s foundation enrollment increased 11.4% and its actual student headcount decreased 2.8%. Between FY1999 and FY2002, its foundation enrollment increased 5.4% and its student headcount decreased 3.6%.

**Standard 9. Budget Planning and Development:** The district has a budget planning and development process that ensures effective use of available resources for district and school improvement initiatives. The school committee, the superintendent, teachers, parents and members of the community all have varying degrees of responsibility to ensure that the school budget meets the educational needs of all students.

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- For the period under review, the district's budget was driven by two main factors: state aid and the required minimum contribution of the member communities. Input from the stakeholders occurred in developing the priorities of the budget. Once the funding source amounts were determined, the input from the stakeholders was adjusted to fit within the available funds.
- For the period under examination, funding levels were not adequate for the implementation of a cluster model.
- The district did not monitor the Health Insurance Trust Fund closely, and did not evidence careful stewardship over this fund.
- The budget document was vague and difficult to understand. Improvements were made but historical trends were explained only in the form of bar graphs with no narrative about significant changes to the budget from year-to-year or from budget projections to the actual budgets.

**Indicator 1.** There are procedures for the development of the district budget to ensure in-put from all staff.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** The department heads worked with the staff to develop the budget under direction of the principal. In the school committee meeting minutes of May 11, 1999, the superintendent stated that the budget development process was a collective process for

FY2000. Interviews with a district-level administrator indicated that directors, department chairs, and cluster leaders worked together to develop the budget, in the latter years under examination. The cluster leaders filtered requests from the department chairs. The cluster leaders then presented their requests to the directors. The directors and the technology director presented their requests to the principal. The principal met with the supervisor of budgets/accounting. The budget was then presented to the superintendent. The final budget was developed into the budget booklet to be presented to the school committee. There was no continued communication downward throughout the system during the budget development process. One district-level administrator commented that, “We [didn’t] know what [went] on in the budget committee.”

**Indicator 2.** Relevant budget decisions are premised on a systemic analysis of student performance data as well as other pertinent information.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Despite the fact that the budget was developed once state figures and the required minimum local contribution of the member communities were determined, the district made a conscious effort to analyze student assessment data to allocate the funds. For example, the MCAS test was used in the budget process. According to district-level administrators, it was not the only student achievement analysis used. They also reviewed enrollment in programs to determine changes in staffing and equipment. The Vocational Advisory Councils also provided input to determine the offerings of the district and possible changes made in existing programs. A district-level administrator analyzed data regarding student performance. If a student had a specific problem, the director worked with the grant coordinator to secure a grant to address the student’s needs.

**Indicator 3.** The district has long-term goals, action plans, and improvement plans, which are used to integrate school and district-wide needs and goals in the budget development process.

**EQA rating: Unsatisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district had long-term goals, action plans, and a school improvement plan. A seven-year School Improvement Plan was approved in 2001. These plans were used in the development of the budget; however, evidence existed that these plans were not strictly adhered to when developing the budget. For example, a district-level administrator mentioned that funding was an issue regarding the integration element of the School Improvement Plan. In developing the fiscal year 2001 budget, the district planned to implement two new initiatives: biotechnology and telecommunications. In the minutes of the school committee meeting of April 25, 2000, the introduction of these two programs created difficulties in the budget process. In developing the fiscal year 2002 budget, the school committee meeting minutes of April 10, 2001, stated that the superintendent and principal, “were not happy with the budget” and they would have to, “work within its [limited] means.”

**Indicator 4.** The district allocated its resources to accomplish targeted initiatives and objectives at the district and school levels to improve student achievement.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** For the years under review, the district properly allocated its budget resources. When presented with a \$242,582 budget deficit in FY2001 budget, the district was able to cut \$242,000 in technology, textbooks, and special education aides to address the deficit. The district purchased technology and textbooks with a \$500,000 carry-over from the prior fiscal year. In FY2001, the budget included funds for the biotechnology and telecommunication programs; these initiatives were agreed on by all stakeholders and the school committee and introduced as part of the building project.

**Indicator 5.** The district employs a cost-effectiveness process in evaluating all of its programs, initiatives, and activities as part of the budget process.

**EQA rating: Unsatisfactory**

**Evidence:** Based on interviews with district-level administrators, the district officials acknowledged that it did not do enough cost-effective oriented evaluations of all its

programs, initiatives, and activities as part of the budget process. One district-level administrator cited the shift in funds to aid in the remediation of students and the addition of more staff and equipment, and further explained that there was no effective evaluation used to determine if the additional funds were being well spent. It was further stated that a concern existed among administrators regarding the participation in programs offered. In the FY2000 management letter, the district's Health Insurance Trust Fund Balance was cited as having a fund balance that exceeded the annual expense of the claims.

**Indicator 6.** The budget document itself is clear, complete, and understandable and provides complete information on all fund sources as well as previous history and trends.

**EQA rating: Poor**

**Evidence:** Based on the review of school committee meeting minutes for FY1999, school committee members voiced concern over the vague nature and lack of specifics in the budget document. The administration acknowledged this problem and worked with an outside consultant to develop a more comprehensive budget packet. Based on the review of documents during the EQA site visit, the budget document now provides two years of detail. Bar graphs of historical data were provided for several previous years. A narrative from the superintendent/director was provided as an introduction to the budget. This narrative highlighted the new programs and initiatives that the district was intending to undertake. However, it did not highlight any significant changes that occurred in the historical data (significant increases/decreases from budgeted figures to actual figures). Nowhere in the document were these issues explained.

**Standard 10. Financial Accounting and Reporting:** The district maintains adequate accounting and financial reporting procedures to inform district-level and school-level decision-making, ensure effective managerial control over the use of funds and facilitate public accountability.

**Preliminary Finding(s):**

- For the period under examination, the district’s reporting relationship to the school committee regarding the budget and its development was not satisfactory, which resulted in the establishment of an oversight subcommittee in FY2002.
- The reports provided to and used by the school committee in its decision-making process were not always accurate, which resulted in a budget deficit in FY2001.
- The district practiced poor fiscal management. The district did not issue any Revenue Anticipation Notes for operations. It used bond proceeds from the construction project. At the end of FY2002, the general fund of the district owed the construction project \$1.98 million. At the time of the EQA’s audit visit, the district still owed \$1 million.

**Indicator 1. School committee policies and administrative procedures establish clear processes and expectations regarding the expenditure, transfer, and investment of funds within the district budget.**

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The school committee had clear policies regarding expenditures and transfers within the district budget. Based on an interview with a district official for finance and operations and the supervisor of budgets/accounting, the expenditures were reviewed by the sub-committee and monthly reports were provided to the school committee. Transfer requests were brought to the school committee on a monthly basis. Reasons for the transfers were provided and referenced in the school committee minutes.

Evidence existed that these procedures were not adhered to closely. A \$371,419 deficit occurred in FY2001, the components of which included a revenue surplus of \$198,790 and an expenditure deficit of \$570,209. In the minutes of September 11, 2001, the treasurer of the school committee made the statement that the district/committee, “need[ed] the option to discuss and approve line item changes when an amount allocated

was not enough.” The committee had a policy on transfers. In addition to the above-mentioned issues, the superintendent first heard of the FY2001 issues in July of 2001.

**Indicator 2.** Regular, timely, and complete financial reports are made to the school committee and the community.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The school committee received a monthly, and detailed, line-item budget report. At the mid-point of the fiscal year, the school committee received details on the status of the district’s revolving funds and special revenue funds. Although not the treasurer, the supervisor of budgets/accounting prepared a treasury/cash analysis for every school. At the end of each fiscal year, the supervisor of budgets/accounting presented a Year End Closing Report to the school committee. This report was a comprehensive analysis of all revenues and expenditures for the previous fiscal year.

In the school committee meeting minutes of January 27, 2000, the district presented a report/analysis on raising the pay for substitutes. This report was requested from the school committee in September of 1999. In the FY2000 management letter, the district was cited for not having accurate records for facility rentals and fee structure. In the FY2001 management letter, the district was cited for lacking a central database for scholarships and awards. This was evidence of inaccurate financial records related to allowed award amounts, donor’s intent, and fund balance. In the FY2002 management letter, the district was cited for no formal preparation of a bank reconciliation for the Health Insurance Trust Fund.

**Indicator 3.** Required local, state, and federal financial reports and statements are filed in a timely and accurate manner.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** For the years under review, the required reports were filed in a timely manner. One instance occurred where a report was not filed on time. In the June 30, 1999

management letter, the district was cited for not filing the Form FR-1 by the October 31, 1999 deadline. It was submitted three weeks late.

**Indicator 4.** The district has efficient accounting technology that integrates district level financial information with the financial information of each school, and allows financial managers and principals to accurately track spending against the budget on a regular basis.

**EQA rating: Unsatisfactory**

**Evidence:** For the years under review, the district used an antiquated DOS-based accounting program. This program was only available for use by the business office. The financial managers within the district (principal, cluster leaders, department chairpersons) did not have access to the financial program. The principal received the same reports that the school committee received on a monthly basis. The principal did not participate in the weekly budget meetings. The district was undertaking an implementation of a windows-based accounting package. This package would likely be implemented district-wide to allow access to all the financial managers. The financial managers within the district would likely be able to track spending more accurately and timely. In FY2001, a deficit occurred. The treasurer of the school committee acknowledged that a breakdown occurred in the reporting of the financial information related to budget versus actual expenditures and budgeted versus actual revenues. This deficit resulted in the formation of the budget oversight sub-committee.

In the school committee meeting minutes of November 13, 2001, a concern was voiced over a “continued deficit of the cafeteria budget.” Based on an interview of the budget oversight subcommittee, the treasurer of the school committee stated that the revolving accounts are monitored closely and subject to yearly audits.

**Indicator 5.** The district reviews student achievement data and such reviews are reflected in its financial decisions.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with district-level administrators indicated that the principal used MCAS test data in developing the budget. Interviewees recognized that improved MCAS test scores was necessary. However, the budget was driven by the state aid and minimum contribution of the member communities.

According to the supervisor of budgets/accounting, due to the MCAS test scores of the district, grants for remediation were received and used to improve test scores. The district also reviewed student population changes in financial planning. The district was in the middle of a \$51 million renovation/expansion project. The budget was developed with this project as another contributing factor. The two new programs, biotechnology and telecommunications, were being introduced through the building project and due to industry demands.

**Indicator 6.** The district regularly employs appropriate independent financial audits and implements their recommendations to assure quality financial systems.

**EQA rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence:** The district employed independent financial audits. Implementation of the auditor's recommendation(s) did occur; however, some relapses in subsequent fiscal years occurred. For example, in the June 30, 2001 management letter, a current year issue existed concerning the record keeping for the district's scholarships and awards. This issue was discovered in FY1997 and was supposedly resolved in FY1998. In the June 30, 2002 management letter, the district was cited for not preparing formal bank reconciliations for the Health Insurance Trust Account. The bank reconciliation finding was an issue in FY1998. It was still an issue cited in FY1999 with some improvements being made. Due to a balance in the fund that exceeded the annual claims, the monitoring of the fund was an issue in the management letter of FY2000.

**Indicator 7.** The district uses reliable forecast mechanism and control procedures to ensure spending is within fiscal budget limits.

**EQA rating: Unsatisfactory**

**Evidence:** Interviews with district-level administrators and a review of the district's documentation indicated that forecast mechanisms were not thought to be reliable. The school did not issue Revenue Anticipation Notes (RANs) for the years under review. The proceeds from the construction project were used in place of the issuance of RANs. This practice was acceptable, as long as the amount borrowed was returned by the end of the fiscal year in which the borrowing occurred. However, this was not the case in the district. At the end of fiscal year 2002, the general fund of the district owed the capital project fund \$1.98 million. At the time of the EQA site visit, the general fund still owed the project exactly \$1 million. This issue highlighted potential control problems in cash management and budget controls. The Health Insurance Trust Fund Balance issues cited above also highlighted concerns regarding the control procedures in place at the district.

## Appendix A: Proficiency Index

The Proficiency Index is a metric used to measure and compare all schools and school districts regarding their performance on each of the MCAS tests. There are three indices: The Combined Proficiency Index (CPI), the English Language Arts Proficiency Index (EPI) and the Math Proficiency Index (MPI). The index is developed as follows:

The Proficiency Index is a measure of the level of achievement a district, school, grade, or subgroup has made in relation to the proficiency achievement level on the annual MCAS test. The Proficiency Index is calculated as follows:

Percentage of students scoring 200-208 on test	x	0 = A
Percentage of students scoring 210-218 on test	x	25 = B
Percentage of students scoring 220-228 on test	x	50 = C
Percentage of students scoring 230-238 on test	x	75 = D
Percentage of students scoring 240 or more on test	x	100 = E

The Proficiency Index (PI) equals the sum of  $A + B + C + D + E = PI$

Example: The Governor Ambrose High School had the following results for the 2001 MCAS test:

12% of all students scored 200-208; therefore,	12%	x	0	=	0
15% of all students scored 210-218; therefore,	15%	x	25	=	3.75
21% of all students scored 220-228; therefore,	21%	x	50	=	10.5
34% of all students scored 230-238; therefore,	34%	x	75	=	25.5
18% of all students scored 240 or more; therefore,	18%	x	100	=	18.0

The Proficiency Index is calculated by adding:  $0 + 3.75 + 10.5 + 25.5 + 18 = 57.75$

The Proficiency Index for the Governor Ambrose High would be: 57.75  
The MPI would use the same calculation for all students taking the math exam.  
The EPI would use the same calculation for all students taking the ELA exam.

The 100 point Proficiency Index is divided into five Proficiency Categories as follows: 90- 100 is 'Very High' (VH), 80-89.9 is 'High' (H), 70-79.9 is 'Moderate' (M), 60-69.9 is 'Low' (L), 40-59.9 is 'Very Low' (VL), and 0-39.9 is 'Critically Low' (CL).

## Appendix B: GLRVT Chapter 70 Funding and Net School Spending FY1993-2003

FY	Foundation	Pct	Foundation	Pct	Required	Pct	Chapter 70	Pct	Required	Pct	Actual	Dollars	Pct	
	Enrollment	Chg	Budget	Chg	Local	Chg	Aid	Chg	Net School	Chg	Net School	Over/Under	Over/	
					Contribution				Spending(NSS)			Spending	Requirement	Under
FY93	1,515		12,847,245		4,128,205		7,471,962		11,600,167		11,600,167	0	0	
FY94	1,509	-0.4	12,697,689	-1	4,303,612	4.2	7,746,631	3.7	12,050,243	3.9	12,106,996	56,753	0.5	
FY95	1,526	1.1	13,178,760	3.8	4,765,812	11	8,226,823	6.2	12,992,635	7.8	13,093,599	100,964	0.8	
FY96	1,616	5.9	14,684,639	11	4,943,517	3.7	9,180,494	11.6	14,124,011	8.7	14,139,310	15,299	0.1	
FY97	1,576	-2.5	14,630,230	-0	4,943,433	0	9,419,866	2.6	14,363,299	1.7	14,452,740	89,441	0.6	
FY98	1,571	-0.3	15,150,488	3.6	5,203,850	5.3	10,188,623	8.2	15,392,473	7.2	15,403,003	10,530	0.1	
FY99	1,620	3.1	15,824,872	4.5	5,320,821	2.2	10,794,575	5.9	16,115,396	4.7	16,053,954	-61,442	-0.4	
FY00	1,682	3.8	17,011,579	7.5	5,418,580	1.8	11,885,647	10.1	17,304,227	7.4	16,878,492	-425,735	-2.5	
FY01	1,634	-2.9	16,862,348	-1	5,048,951	-6.8	12,332,578	3.8	17,381,529	0.4	18,221,780	840,251	4.8	
FY02	1,707	4.5	18,344,292	8.8	4,576,204	-9.4	13,802,543	11.9	18,378,747	5.7	17,899,147	-479,600	-2.6	
FY03	1,688	-1.1	18,883,200	2.9	5,199,137	14	14,163,663	2.6	19,362,800	5.4	19,342,324*	-20,476	-0.1	

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FY	Dollars per Foundation Enrollment			Percentage of Foundation			Chapter 70 Aid as Pct of Actual NSS
	Fnd Budget	Ch 70 Aid	Actual NSS	Ch 70 Required NSS	Actual NSS		
FY93	8,480	4,932	7,657	58.2	90	90.3	64.4
FY94	8,415	5,134	8,023	61	95	95.3	64.3
FY95	8,636	5,391	8,580	62.4	99	99.4	63.3
FY96	9,087	5,681	8,750	62.5	96	96.3	65
FY97	9,283	5,977	9,171	64.4	98	98.8	65.6
FY98	9,644	6,485	9,805	67.2	102	101.7	66.2
FY99	9,768	6,663	9,910	68.2	102	101.4	67
FY00	10,114	7,066	10,035	69.9	102	99.2	68.7
FY01	10,320	7,547	11,152	73.1	103	108.1	71
FY02	10,747	8,086	10,486	75.2	100	97.6	75.1
FY03	11,187	8,391	11,459	75	103	102.4	73.1