



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

School District Examination Report:

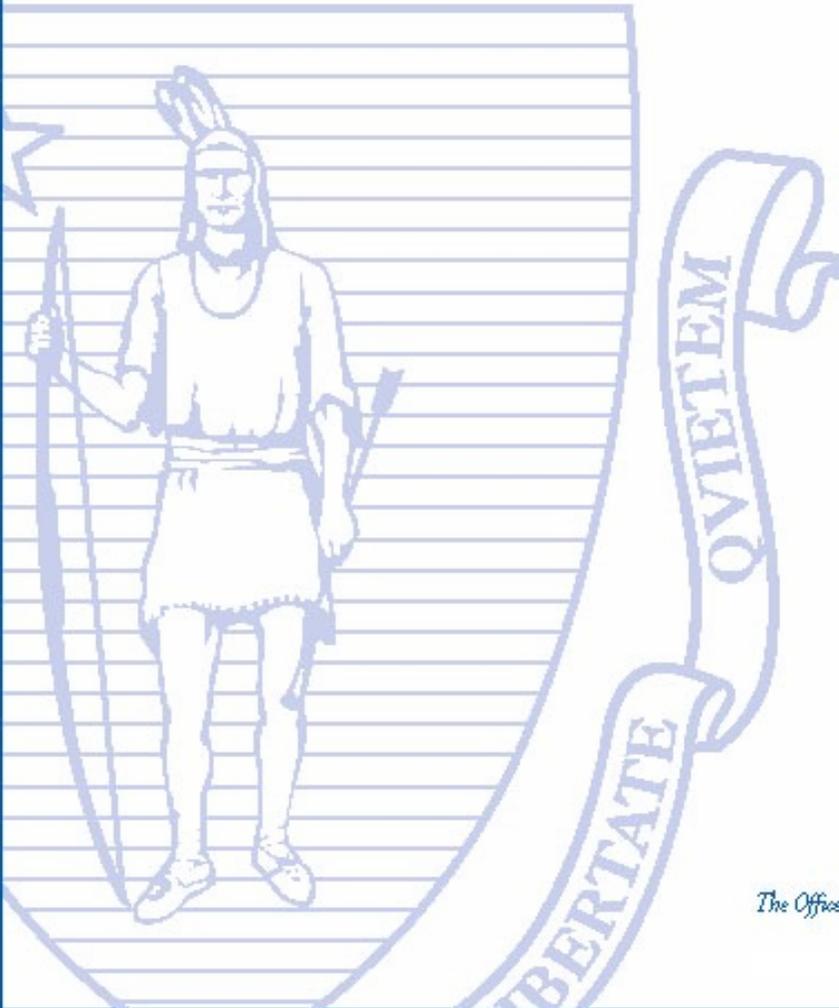
Northampton Smith
Vocational and Agricultural
High School
Technical Report



data driven

standards based

learner centered →



*The Education Management Audit Council
The Office for Educational Quality and Accountability
2001-2004*

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of Educational Quality and Accountability

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The Educational Management Audit Council accepted the examination report with concerns at their meeting of December 1, 2005. As a result of the findings and performance cited in the report, the district submitted a remediation plan and will be monitored for future improvement in student achievement.

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 of the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, Frank R. Llamas; the school department staff of the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School; and the member communities.

Table of Contents

<u>Executive Summary</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Part I: Overview of the EQA Review Process and the District</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Part II: Tier I Analysis of Student Achievement and MCAS Test Data</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Part III: Domain Findings and Summary</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Appendix A: Proficiency Index (PI)</u>	<u>113</u>
<u>Appendix B: Northampton-Smith’s Chapter 70 Funding and NSS FY1996-2004</u>	<u>114</u>

Executive Summary

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) examined the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in late May and early June of 2005. During 2001-2004, Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School was among the 'Low' performing school systems and the 'Low' performing vocational-technical districts in the Commonwealth. The following summarizes the findings of the examination and the district's performance on the 2004 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test.

Proficiency/Achievement:

- The Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School Average Proficiency Index (API) on the 2004 MCAS test was 61.8. The state average API among vocational-technical schools was 70.4, placing the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School below average among vocational-technical schools. The district's English Language Arts (ELA) Proficiency Index (EPI) was 63.8; the state average EPI among vocational-technical schools was 74.0. The district's math Proficiency Index (MPI) was 59.7, while the state average MPI among vocational-technical schools was 66.8
- Northampton-Smith's API on the 2004 MCAS tests was 8.6 points below the average API for all vocational-technical schools in Massachusetts. In 2004, Northampton-Smith's ELA EPI was 10.2 points lower than the average EPI for vocational-technical schools in the state; its MPI was 7.1 points lower than the average MPI. In 2004, the EPI and API were 'Low' and the MPI was 'Very Low.'
- On the MCAS retest administered in the spring of 2005, 100 percent of Northampton-Smith's class of 2005 earned a Competency Determination (CD), compared to 95 percent of the statewide class of 2004.
- On the MCAS retest administered in the spring of 2005, 96 percent of Northampton-Smith's class of 2006 earned a CD, compared to 90 percent of the statewide class of 2005.
- Less than one third of all students in Northampton-Smith attained proficiency on the 2003 and 2004 MCAS Grade 10 tests. These proportions were not different from those of all vocational-technical education students in the state on those subtests.

- Less than one third of all students in Northampton-Smith attained proficiency on the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 ELA and math subtests. The proportion on the Grade 10 ELA subtest was lower than that that of all vocational-technical education students in the state on that subtest.

Equity of Achievement/Proficiency

- The performance gap in ELA was 74.5 PI points in Northampton-Smith in 2004. In math, the performance gap was 67.7 PI points.
- Less than one-third of students with disabilities in Northampton-Smith attained proficiency on the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 tests. This percentage was lower than that of all vocational-technical education students with disabilities in the state and of regular education students in Northampton-Smith.
- Less than one-third of students eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch (FRL/Y) and students eligible for free lunch (FL) in Northampton-Smith attained proficiency on the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 test. These percentages were lower than the percentages of all FRL/Y and FL students in the state and of FRL/N students in Northampton-Smith.

Improvement:

- On both the MCAS Grade 10 ELA and math subtests, the percentages of all Northampton-Smith students attaining proficiency were higher in 2004 than in 2001.
- In Northampton-Smith between 2001 and 2004, the EPI increased by 14.7 points. The MPI increased by 11.1 points between 2001 and 2004.

Equity of Improvement:

- The improvement gap in ELA closed by 9.7 PI points between 2002 and 2004 in Northampton-Smith; in math, it closed by 15.2 PI points.

Participation and Access:

- Overall, eligible students participated in the ELA and math assessments at required levels in Northampton-Smith.

Summary of Preliminary Findings by Domain:

Assessment and Evaluation:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on six, ‘Poor’ on fourteen, and ‘Unsatisfactory’ on eight of the twenty-eight performance indicators in this domain.
- While the school documented increasing and decreasing assessment scores on the School Improvement Plan (SIP), it rarely evaluated the implications of the results on programs.
- Achievement of special education students was lower than that of special education students in other vocational-technical schools, and over 90 percent of the students enrolled in lower level ELA and math courses were special education students.
- Few teachers received MCAS test results, and generally, vocational and academic teachers had limited responsibility for analyzing student achievement.
- Northampton-Smith’s student attendance rates of 90.5 percent, 92.9 percent, and 92.5 percent in 2002, 2003, and 2004, respectively, were all lower than the state attendance standard of 93 percent and the state average of 94 percent.
- During the review period, the chronic absenteeism rate was approximately 23 percent, despite the consequences of the school’s attendance policies.
- The school did not analyze disproportionate rates of attendance, chronic absenteeism, suspensions, and dropouts for all subgroups during the review period.
- Administrators and teachers were not held accountable for student assessment results in their evaluations.
- The school did not have a regular systemic practice of data-driven program evaluation.
- Due to the lack of data-driven program evaluation, program evaluation results were not based on improving student achievement.

Curriculum and Instruction:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on eleven, ‘Poor’ on fifteen, and ‘Unsatisfactory’ on six of the thirty-one performance indicators in this domain.

- The written curricula available in ELA and math were incomplete and provided teachers with little guidance for teaching state competencies and for horizontal alignment.
- Academic skills were not integrated into vocational courses. The curriculum documents of the vocational areas were frequently purchased, reflected the national standards of the particular vocational area, and, in some cases, were considered outdated by administrators.
- The lines of responsibility in the school organizational chart and the job descriptions for the principal and curriculum coordinator positions led to a lack of curriculum leadership.
- Analysis of test scores by teachers was minimal and did not lead to curriculum revision.
- The school failed to address both the disaggregated special education results and the fact that special education students received math and English instruction in lower level classes in which they made up over 90 percent of the membership.
- The math and ELA curricula lacked the scope and sequences and pacing guides that would have assured the sequencing and alignment of learning goals.
- The school did not have a documented process involving teachers in the annual review and revision of curricula based on the analyses of results of standardized tests.
- Teachers were not trained in data analysis, and did not use student performance data strategically to plan instruction.
- School proficiency rates increased; however, the increase was not at the rate of other state vocational schools, and the gap between ELA and math scores increased.
- School technology was inadequate in both the academic and vocational areas.
- The school had neither an ELL coordinator nor an ELL protocol until the final year of the review period, and was not prepared to identify, assess, and serve ELL students.
- The school did not formally and systematically analyze data on discipline, dropouts, and suspensions by subgroup to identify inequities. Both female and Hispanic students were over-represented in suspensions.

- Despite efforts in 2002 to reduce high in- and out-of-school suspension rates, suspension rates increased in 2003.
- Despite adjustments to the math program and an emphasis on interdisciplinary writing and math, special education and low income students failed to meet the performance targets in ELA and math in 2003.
- While subgroup performance at Smith improved in both ELA and math from 2002 to 2004, Professional development was not informed by the results of program and teacher evaluations because it had suspended evaluations of teachers with professional status for most of the review period and because the school did not evaluate its academic programs, except for mandated evaluations.
- The school did not analyze the needs of the low income and special education subgroups; neither subgroup met the AYP performance target in 2003.
- Neither administrators nor teachers were trained in the use of data to find answers to relevant questions about teaching and learning, and although school proficiency rates improved, the improvement was not at the rate of all state vocational schools.

Academic Support Services:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on nine and ‘Poor’ on one of the ten performance indicators in this domain.
- Procedures were in place that monitored student progress, analyzed performance data, and provided academic support programs to students who needed assistance.
- The school determined student academic needs through a variety of local and standardized assessments, and the identified student needs resulted in a range of support services.
- Mandated evaluations of program results were conducted indicating the percentage of students successfully passing the MCAS re-tests, the level of confidence in academic skills, and the improvements in customized pre- and post-tests.

- Although improvement was observed, academic support programs did not result in a substantial improvement; the school's average Proficiency Index was lower than the average for vocational-technical schools in Massachusetts.

Leadership, Governance, and Organization:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on seven, 'Poor' on seven, and 'Unsatisfactory' on four of the eighteen performance indicators in this domain.
- The board of trustees did not have a comprehensive policy manual to provide guidance in the administration and operation of the school.
- Although the trustees were knowledgeable about their responsibilities, they exceeded their authority by requiring their approval for all purchases greater than \$5,000 or for any purchases of an unusual nature.
- Building administrators and teachers possessed limited skills in the use of test analysis to assess and improve programs and services.
- A review of administrator personnel files revealed that several administrators did not possess the appropriate certification during the review period.
- The lack of timelines and budgets in the SIP and limited reporting to the community inhibited the extent to which the school could demonstrate the effectiveness of the SIP.
- A review of the superintendent's personnel file found no evaluations performed during the review period.
- The divided administrative team resulted in a flawed educational and operational management system with deficiencies including a school lacking in data analysis, urgency for change, communication, curriculum coordination, principal accountability, and administrative teamwork.
- The superintendent and the principal did not feel there was an effective delegation of responsibilities in place to manage the school educationally and operationally.
- The hiring of teachers was not the responsibility of the principal and was not perceived by the principal as an open and clear process.

- No policy or written practice existed to encourage personnel to remain in the employ of the school and no retention data were provided.

Business and Finance:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on twenty-one, ‘Poor’ on six, and ‘Unsatisfactory’ on one of the twenty-eight performance indicators in this domain.
- The school did not meet the net school spending (NSS) requirement for fiscal years 2003 and 2004; however, the city met NSS when Smith spending was combined with the city of Northampton school spending.
- The budget development process did not include the SIP or an ongoing analysis of student achievement.
- The operating budget was level-funded at \$4,522,398 while the city’s share of the operating budget decreased from \$399,878 to \$398,139 and then to \$224,555. However, the city provided over \$800,000 in capital expenditures during the review period.
- While the school lacked written policies in the areas of budgeting and finance, it had practices, guidelines, and procedures in place for expenditures and transfers.
- The school did not use student achievement data in its financial decisions.
- The school lacked a preventative maintenance program.
- A walk-through of the buildings and grounds revealed that, while they were of adequate size, well lit, and safe, they were generally not well cleaned or maintained.

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

On May 31 through June 3, 2005, the EQA conducted an independent examination of the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School for the period between 2001 and 2004. 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 involved two tiers of investigation and used 15 standards. This report is based on source documents, correspondence sent prior to the on-site visit, interviews with the representative from the school committee, the district leadership team, and school administrators and additional documents submitted while in the district. The report does not consider documents, revised data, or comments that may have been submitted after the on-site visit.

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, continue to transform vocational-technical high schools in the Commonwealth. In 1906, Massachusetts was the first state to publicly fund industrial education, and became the model for other states and for the provision of federal funds through the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. The early mission included economic and social components to better provide a skilled workforce to meet the demands of the Industrial Revolution, and to increase the single-digit graduation rate from classical-education high schools. Legislation between 1963 and 1984 reinforced the focus on preparation for highly 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 integration of academic and vocational-technical 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 improve academic and technical performance.

Both the first-generation industrial trade schools and the second-generation vocational-technical schools characteristically use project-based instructional methodology, real-world curricula, and industry-standard facilities and equipment. On-task time is crucial to acquiring technical skills and knowledge, but the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 reduced the emphasis on time on-task as a measure of educational quality, focusing instead on outcomes as measured by

the Certificate of Occupational Proficiency (COP) and industry credentialing. The first- and second-generation schools differ greatly in their approach to the core academic skills. The mission of vocational-technical schools is to educate and prepare students for gainful employment and continuing education (post-secondary, as well as job-based). This implies that the scope and rigor of their academic courses must match those of traditional academic high schools. The organization and scheduling required to achieve both these outcomes is clearly challenging and can be highly inconsistent.

The student composition of vocational-technical schools differs from that of academic schools in several important ways. Vocational-technical students tend to be more focused on career preparation, to seek relevance in their course of study, and to be experiential, visual, and kinesthetic learners. As a result of the teaching styles used at academic middle schools, these students enter vocational-technical programs appearing less academically successful or more ill prepared than less experiential learners. And, because of legislative mandates to serve special populations and the popular perception that an occupational-preparatory curriculum is less demanding than a college-preparatory one, vocational-technical schools have, on average, at least twice the proportion of special-needs students as found in academic high schools.

Academic standards- and performance-based graduation requirements have had an effect on vocational-technical high schools, given their dual mission, distinctive structure, and population traits. The highest performing vocational-technical high schools tend to be measured 'Low Performing' by the recently developed MCAS test proficiency index.

The leadership of vocational-technical high schools and districts must address 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 help administrators meet these challenges. Administrators must orchestrate the institutional changes needed to make these schools and their students more successful.

Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School is located in the Town of Northampton in central Hampshire County, Massachusetts. The Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School serves

students from its one member community, Northampton, and many surrounding communities. Education, healthcare, and social services, followed by retail trade, are the largest sources of employment in Northampton. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Northampton has a population of 28,978 and a median family income of \$56,844. The median family income in Massachusetts is \$61,664. Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School's school committee has five members. Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School is composed of one school serving grades 9-12. Massachusetts Department of Education figures indicate that there were 437 students enrolled in the district as of October 1, 2004. Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School's demographic/subgroup composition is: 86.7 percent White; 11.0 percent Hispanic; 1.4 percent African-American; 0.5 percent Asian-American; 0.5 percent Native American; 0.0 percent students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP); 25.2 percent students of Low-Income; and 41.9 percent special education students (SPED).

Smith Vocational's Chapter 70 Funding and Net School Spending FY1996 to 2004: For the nine-year period, FY1996 to FY2004, Smith Vocational met the state-mandated Net School Spending Requirement. For the period between FY1996 and FY2004, Chapter 70 Aid to Smith Vocational decreased 2.2 percent (from \$749,067 to \$732,334). Smith Vocational's Required Local Contribution increased 51.4 percent (from \$928,485 to \$1,406,040). Since FY1996, Smith Vocational received a total of \$7,428,315 in Chapter 70 Aid and was required to raise locally \$9,566,975. From FY2001 to FY2004, Chapter 70 Aid was \$3,468,545 and the Required Local Contribution was \$4,519,399. For the period between FY1996 and FY2004, Smith Vocational's foundation enrollment increased 5.4 percent and its student headcount decreased 12.3 percent. Between FY2001 and FY2004, its foundation enrollment decreased 13.3 percent and its student headcount decreased 6.7 percent.

This report finds Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School to be a 'Low' performing school district, with 'Low' student achievement on the MCAS ELA subtests and 'Very Low' performance on the MCAS math subtests. Since 2001, Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School's MCAS test scores have improved gradually. However, 24 percent of its students scored above standard on the 2004 MCAS test.

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

Northampton Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School

At Tier I, while particular attention was paid to the 2004 MCAS test, the EQA review of Northampton Smith MCAS test results (2001-2004) 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 the MCAS test performance vary among the district's student subgroups?
3. **Improvement**: How has the MCAS test performance for all students in the district changed over time?
4. **Equity of Improvement**: How has the 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 respond accurately to these questions, the EQA subjected the most current state and district MCAS test results to a series of analyses to determine whether there were differences between the mean results of district students and those of students statewide or between student subgroups within the district. Descriptive analyses of the results of the 2004 MCAS test revealed differences between the scores of students in the district and the average scores of students in Massachusetts.

To highlight those differences the data was then summarized in several ways: a criterion-based summary of student achievement in Northampton Smith; comparative analyses of district-wide, subject-area, grade, school, and subgroup achievement in relation to that of students statewide, in relation to the district averages, and in relation to other subject areas, grades, and subgroups. A discussion of that summary follows.

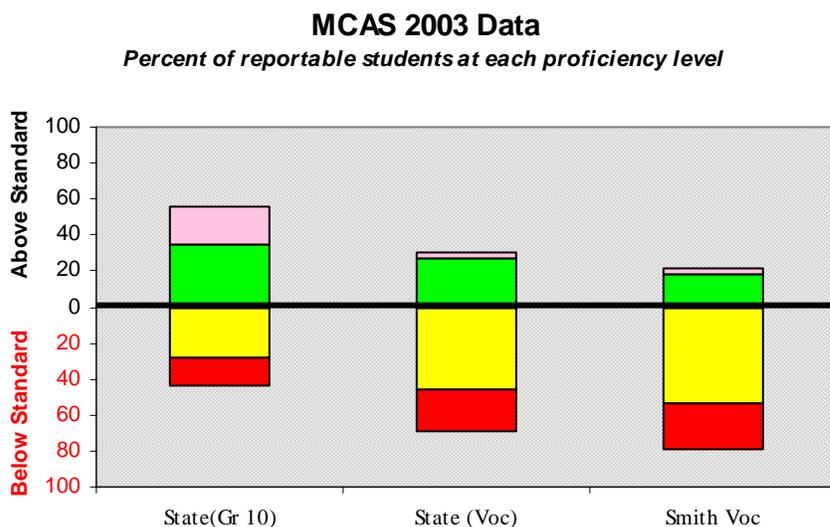
1. Proficiency/Achievement: To what extent is the MCAS test performance of all the district’s students meeting or exceeding state proficiency standards?

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Less than one third of all students in Northampton Smith attained proficiency on the 2003 and 2004 MCAS Grade 10 tests.
- Less than one third of all students in Northampton Smith attained proficiency on the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 English Language Arts (ELA) and math tests.
- The proportion all students in Northampton Smith who attained proficiency on the Grade 10 ELA test was lower than that of all vocational-technical education students in the state on that test.
- Northampton Smith’s proficiency gap in ELA was 36.2 PI points; in math, it was 40.3 PI points.
- The proficiency gap in ELA was wider than that of all vocational-technical school districts in the state.

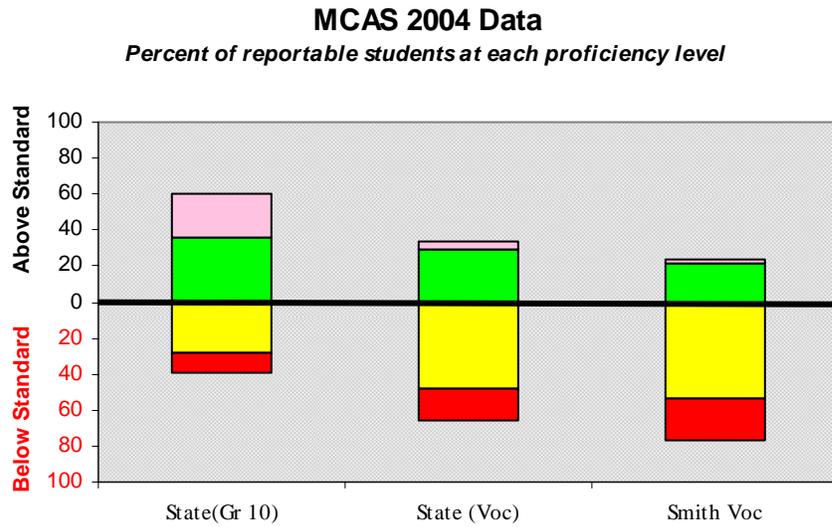
Figures/Tables 1/A-B: Student MCAS Test Performance, Overall, 2003 and 2004

A.



	Advanced	22	4	2
	Proficient	34	27	19
	Needs Improv.	29	46	54
	Warning/Failing	15	24	25

B.

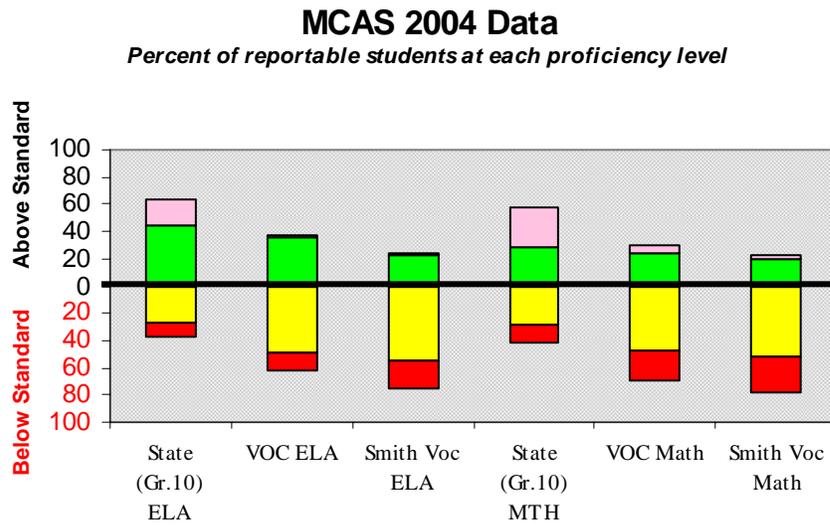


	Advanced	24	5	2
	Proficient	36	30	22
	Needs Improv.	28	48	53
	Warning/Failing	12	18	23

Analysis of Figures/Tables 1/A-B:

- On the 2003 MCAS Grade 10 tests, 21 percent of Northampton Smith students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories.
- On the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 tests, 24 percent of Northampton Smith students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories.

Figures/Tables 2: MCAS Test Performance, by Subject, 2004



	Advanced	19	2	1	30	7	2
	Proficient	44	36	23	28	24	20
	Needs Improv.	28	49	55	29	48	52
	Warning/Failing	9	14	20	14	22	26

Analysis of Figure/Table 2:

- On the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 ELA test, 24 percent of Northampton Smith students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories, 14 percentage points lower than that of all vocational-technical education students in the state on that test.
- On the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 math test, 22 percent of Northampton Smith students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories.

Table 3: MCAS Proficiency Index, Between Vocational-Technical Schools, 2002, 2003, 2004

District	ELA	Math	API	ELA	Math	API	ELA	Math	API
	2002 CPI	2002 CPI		2003 CPI	2003 CPI		2004 CPI	2004 CPI	
Bristol County Agr.	74.7	66.0	70.4	85.5	79.4	82.5	87.7	88.9	88.3
Norfolk County Agr.	83.2	66.1	74.6	88.9	76.3	82.6	88.1	83.7	85.9
Blackstone Valley Reg.	69.7	63.0	66.4	75.2	68.0	71.6	84.5	79.9	82.2
Shawsheen Valley Voc. Tech.	73.2	51.4	62.3	83.8	72.2	78.0	82.2	76.4	79.3
South Shore Reg. Voc. Tech.	73.2	58.2	65.7	76.7	68.8	72.8	80.0	75.7	77.9
Northern Berkshire Voc.	71.6	58.3	64.9	75.0	62.3	68.6	81.2	72.9	77.1
Minuteman Voc. Tech.	71.6	59.4	65.5	75.9	70.5	73.2	76.2	75.3	75.7
Franklin County	76.1	52.1	64.1	72.5	67.6	70.1	79.3	70.5	74.9
Upper Cape Cod Voc. Tech.	68.1	53.0	60.6	74.5	56.0	65.3	79.7	68.0	73.8
North Shore Reg. Voc.	68.2	54.8	61.5	71.7	63.5	67.6	73.9	69.4	71.6
Cape Cod Reg. Voc. Tech.	65.8	51.5	58.6	72.7	54.9	63.8	74.7	67.8	71.3
Old Colony Reg. Voc. Tech.	62.1	52.5	57.3	69.2	60.8	65.0	71.9	69.7	70.8
Blue Hills Voc.	68.7	59.2	63.9	72.6	59.4	66.0	75.8	65.6	70.7
Average	65.0	50.9	58.0	71.5	60.7	66.1	74.0	66.8	70.4
Bristol-Plymouth Voc. Tech.	65.5	51.2	58.3	76.1	59.7	67.9	72.9	67.6	70.2
Montachusett Voc. Tech. Reg.	60.3	45.6	53.0	71.2	62.2	66.7	75.4	64.4	69.9
Southern Worcester Cty VT	62.1	48.6	55.4	71.1	60.7	65.9	72.7	66.9	69.8
Nashoba Valley Tech	58.8	52.1	55.4	63.7	59.6	61.6	68.5	70.0	69.2
Whittier Voc.	55.4	41.4	48.4	64.8	48.2	56.5	72.3	64.9	68.6
Tri-County	66.5	57.6	62.0	75.4	65.0	70.2	72.9	63.9	68.4
Pathfinder Voc. Tech.	62.6	52.4	57.5	65.0	60.4	62.7	73.4	63.1	68.2
Assabet Valley Reg. Voc. Tech.	67.3	46.8	57.0	67.9	52.9	60.4	70.9	63.7	67.3
Southeastern Reg. Voc. Tech.	59.0	40.6	49.8	65.5	49.1	57.3	70.8	61.5	66.1
Greater New Bedford	61.8	42.2	52.0	66.1	48.6	57.3	69.8	59.6	64.7
Northeast Metro Voc.	60.8	31.3	46.0	65.7	63.6	64.7	65.0	61.8	63.4
Essex Agr. Tech.	65.7	46.5	56.1	72.3	53.2	62.7	71.7	52.8	62.3
Northampton Smith	57.2	51.1	54.2	60.7	57.7	59.2	63.8	59.7	61.8
Greater Lowell Voc. Tec	60.3	53.5	56.9	65.8	56.6	61.2	64.8	58.7	61.7
Greater Fall River	56.5	47.1	51.8	69.8	58.1	63.9	69.2	54.2	61.7
So Middlesex Voc. Tech. Reg.	49.2	36.8	43.0	63.0	56.6	59.8	60.5	50.6	55.6
Greater Lawrence RVT	45.9	37.1	41.5	55.4	46.9	51.1	59.1	50.1	54.6

Analysis of Figure/Table 3

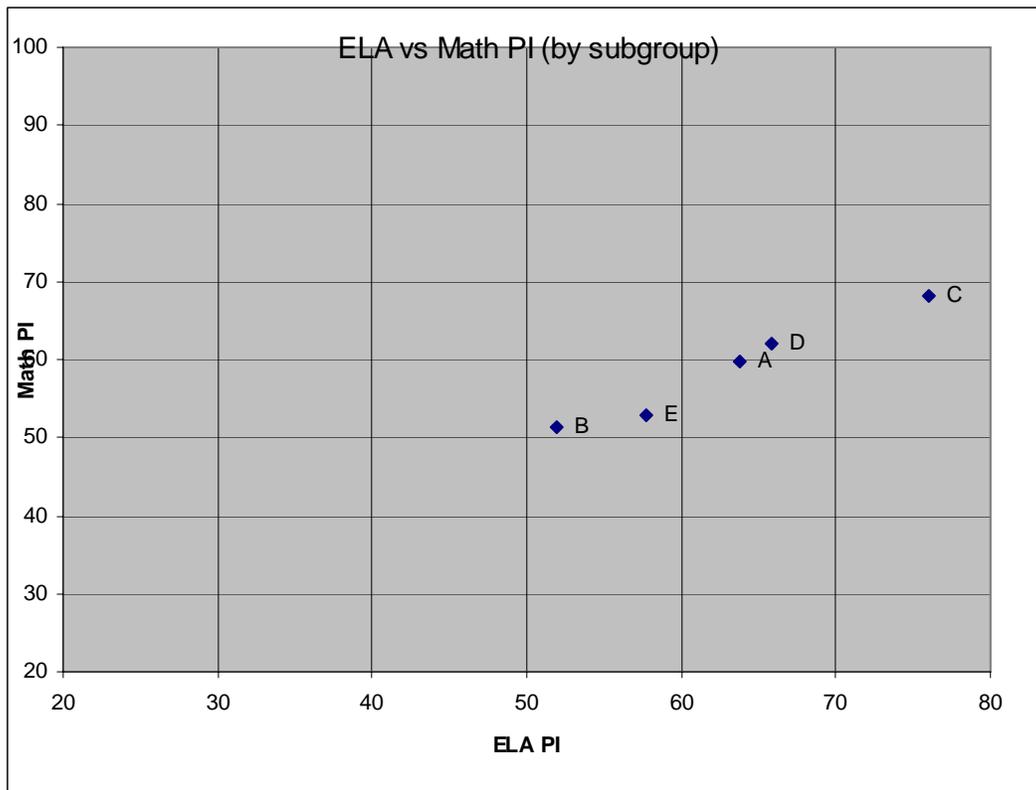
- Northampton Smith's proficiency gap in ELA was 36.2 PI points in 2004; statewide, the proficiency gap in ELA was 26.0 PI points.
- Northampton Smith's proficiency gap in math was 40.3 PI points in 2004.
- In 2003, Northampton Smith's average proficiency index (API) was 6.9 PI points lower than the average for all vocational-technical schools in Massachusetts. In 2004, Northampton Smith's API was 8.6 PI points lower than the average.
- In 2004, Northampton Smith's EPI was 10.2 PI points lower than the average EPI for vocational-technical schools in the state. Its MPI was 7.1 PI points lower than the average MPI.
- In 2003, Northampton Smith's EPI was 'Low' and the API and MPI were 'Very Low.' In 2004, the EPI and API were 'Low' and the MPI was 'Very Low.'
- In 2003, Northampton Smith had the fifth lowest API among the 30 vocational-technical schools in Massachusetts. In 2004, it had the fifth lowest API.

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The performance gap in ELA was 74.5 PI points in Northampton Smith in 2004. In math, the performance gap was 67.7 PI points.
- Less than one third of students with disabilities in Northampton Smith attained proficiency on the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 tests, lower than that of regular education students in Northampton Smith.
- Less than one third of students eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch (FRL/Y) and students eligible for free lunch (FL) in Northampton Smith attained proficiency on the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 test, lower than that of FRL/N students in Northampton Smith.

Figure /Table 4: MCAS Proficiency Index, by Free/Reduced lunch Status and Student Status, 2004



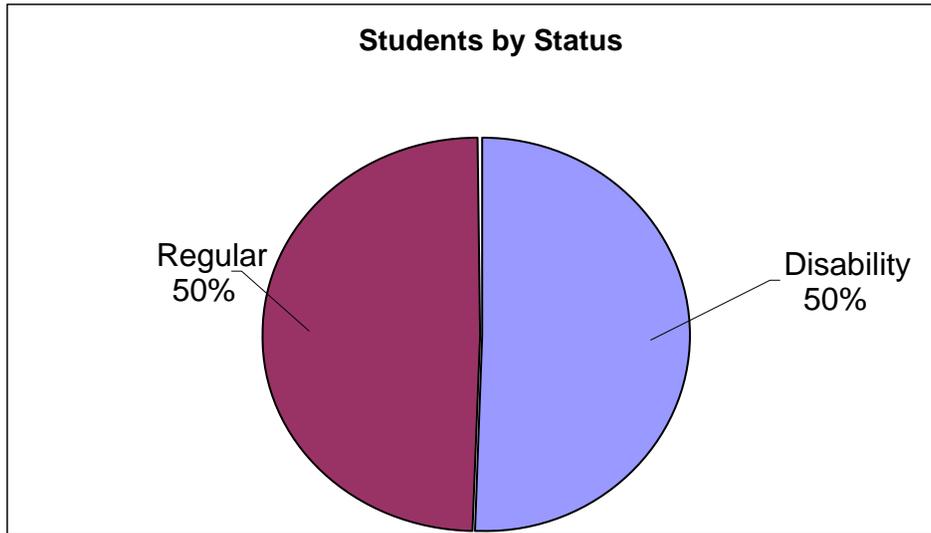
		ELA	Math	# of Tests
A	NORTHAMPTON SMITH	63.8	59.7	103
B	Disability	51.9	51.4	52
C	Regular	76.0	68.1	51
D	FRL (N)	65.9	62.0	77
E	FRL (Y)	57.7	52.9	26

Analysis of Figure/Table 4:

- In Northampton Smith, the proficiency gap in 2004 ELA was 36.2 PI points for all students; for regular education students it was 24.0 PI points.
- The proficiency gap in math was 40.3 points for all students in Northampton Smith in 2004.
- The subgroup performance range between the highest and lowest ELA performance ratings for a subgroup was 24.1 points in Northampton Smith in 2004. In math, this subgroup performance range was 16.7 points.
- The average of the differences between the 2004 ELA performance rating of the highest-scoring subgroup and those of the other subgroups (excluding the lowest-scoring subgroup) was 14.2 points in Northampton Smith. In math, this average subgroup gap was 10.7 points.
- The performance gap in ELA was 74.5 PI points in Northampton Smith in 2004. In math, the performance gap was 67.7 points.

Figures/Table 5/A-C: Student Population by Reportable Subgroups

A.



B.

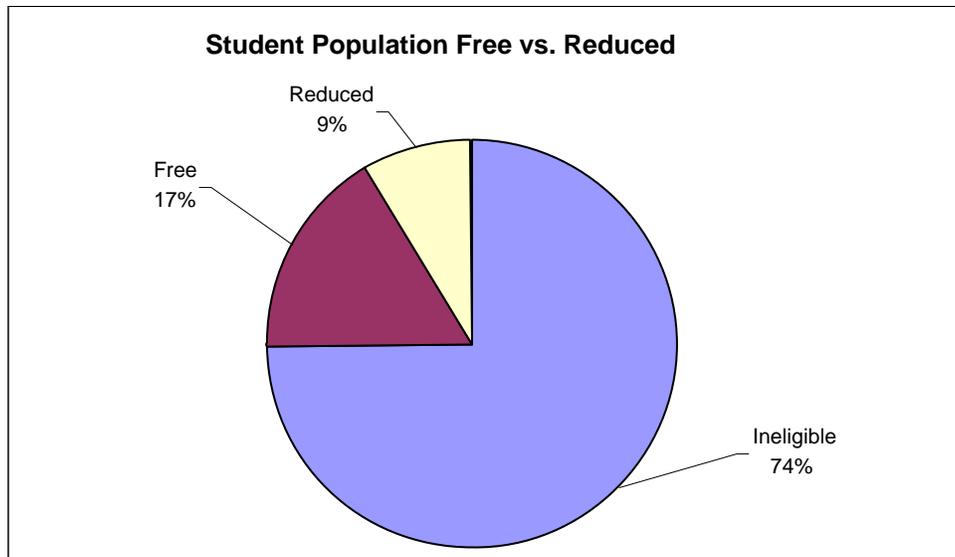
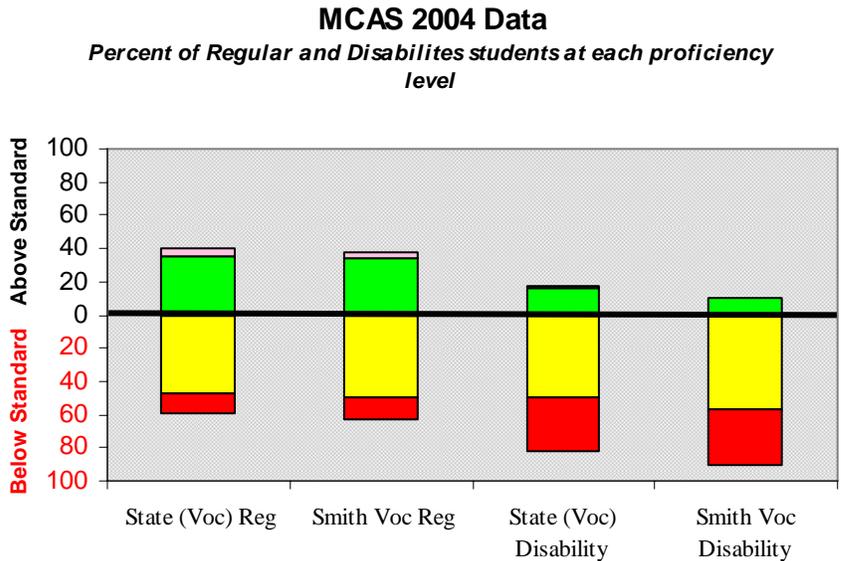


Figure /Table 6: Student Subgroup MCAS Test Performance, by Student Status, 2004

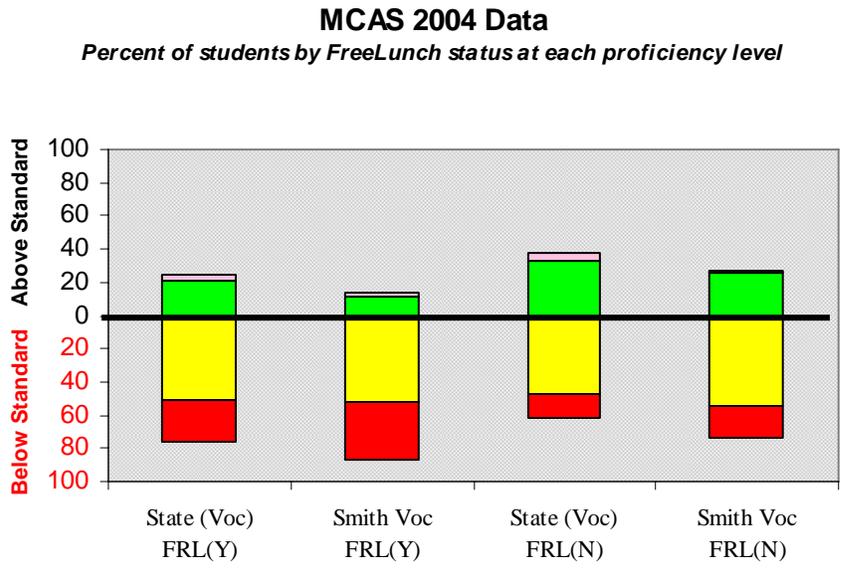


	Advanced	6	3	1	0
	Proficient	35	34	17	10
	Needs Improv.	48	50	50	57
	Warning/Failing	12	13	32	34

Analysis of Figure/Table 6:

- On the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 test, 10 percent of the students with disabilities in Northampton Smith scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories, 27 percentage points lower than that of Northampton Smith regular education students.

Figure /Table 7: Student Subgroup MCAS Test Performance, by Eligibility for Free/Reduced Lunch Status, 2004

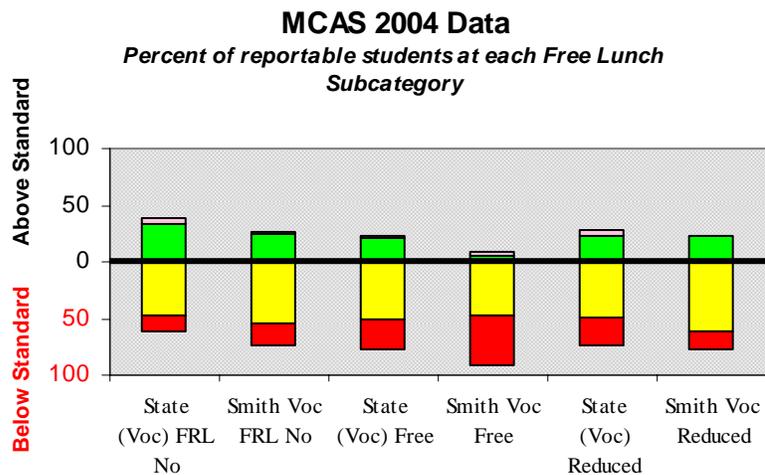


	Advanced	3	2	5	1
	Proficient	22	12	33	25
	Needs Improv.	50	52	47	54
	Warning/Failing	25	35	15	19

Analysis of Figure/Table 7:

- On the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 test, 14 percent of the FRL/Y students in Northampton Smith scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories, 12 percentage points lower than that of FRL/N students in Northampton Smith.

Figure /Table 8: Student Subgroup MCAS Test Performance, by Eligibility for Free/Reduced Lunch Status, 2004



Advanced	5	1	2	3	4	0
Proficient	33	25	21	6	24	22
Needs Improv.	47	54	51	47	49	61
Warning/Failing	15	20	26	44	24	17

Analysis of Figure/Table 8:

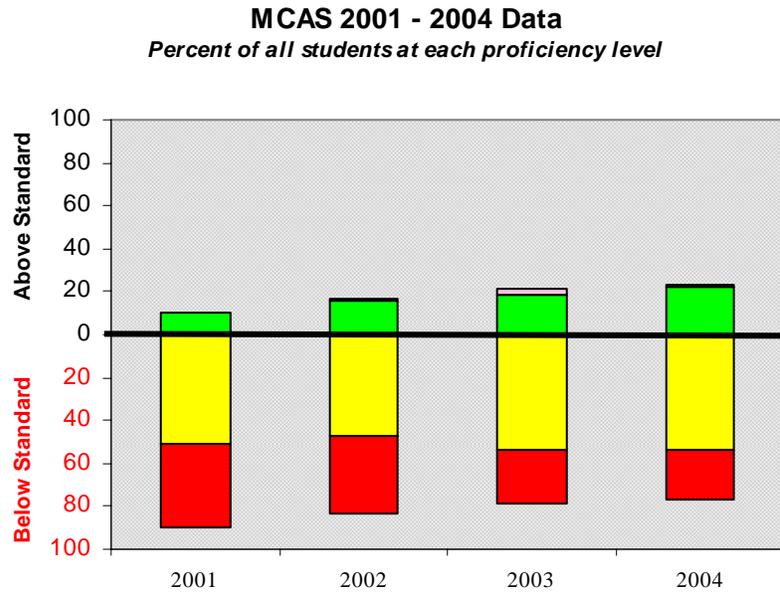
- On the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 test, 9 percent of the FL students in Northampton Smith scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories, 17 percentage points lower than that of FRL/N students in Northampton Smith.

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

Preliminary Findings:

- Overall, the percentage of Northampton Smith students attaining proficiency on the MCAS tests was higher in 2004 than it was in 2001.
- In ELA, the proficiency gap was 14.7 PI points narrower in 2004 than in 2001, an improvement rate of 28.9 percent.
- In math, the proficiency gap was 11.1 PI points narrower in 2004 than in 2001, an improvement rate of 21.6 percent.
- On the Grade 10 ELA test, the percentage of all Northampton Smith students attaining proficiency was higher in 2004 than in 2001.
- Overall and on both the Grade 10 ELA and math tests, the percentages of all Northampton Smith students scoring in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category were lower in 2004 than in 2001.

Figure/Tables 9: Student MCAS Test Performance, 2001-2004

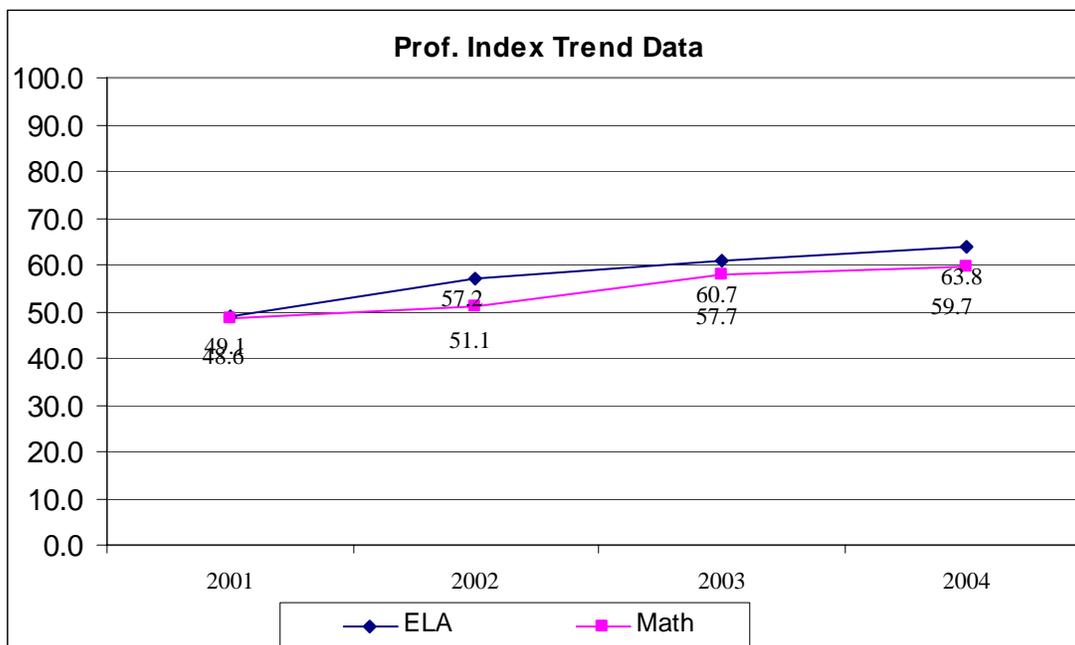


	Advanced	0	1	2	1
	Proficient	10	16	19	22
	Needs Improv.	51	47	54	53
	Warning/Failing	39	36	25	23

Analysis of Figure/Table 9:

- The percentage of Northampton Smith students scoring in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories on the MCAS Grade 10 test was 13 percentage points higher in 2004 than in 2001.
- The percentage of Northampton Smith students scoring in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category on the MCAS Grade 10 tests was 16 percentage points lower in 2004 than in 2001.

Figure/Table 10: Proficiency Index Trend Data MCAS 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004



Trend Data MCAS, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 (detail)

	ELA				Math			
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2001	2002	2003	2004
Advanced	0.0%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.9%	3.9%	1.9%
Proficient	8.3%	18.0%	19.1%	23.3%	11.8%	13.4%	18.3%	20.4%
Needs Improvement	52.3%	48.7%	62.9%	55.3%	50.0%	45.5%	45.2%	51.5%
Warning/Failing	39.5%	32.4%	17.1%	20.4%	38.2%	40.2%	32.7%	26.2%

Analysis of Figure/Table 10:

- The proficiency gap in ELA was 14.7 PI points narrower in 2004 than in 2001 in Northampton Smith.
- The proficiency gap in math was 11.1 PI points narrower in 2004 than in 2004 in Northampton Smith.
- The gap between EPI and the MPI widened by 3.6 points between 2001 and 2004 in Northampton Smith.
- The percentage of Northampton Smith students scoring in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories on the MCAS Grade 10 ELA test was 16.0 percentage points higher in 2004 than in 2001. The percentage of students scoring in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category was 19.1 percentage points lower in 2004 than in 2001.
- The percentage of Northampton Smith students scoring in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories on the MCAS Grade 10 math test was 10.5 percentage points higher in 2004 than in 2001.

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

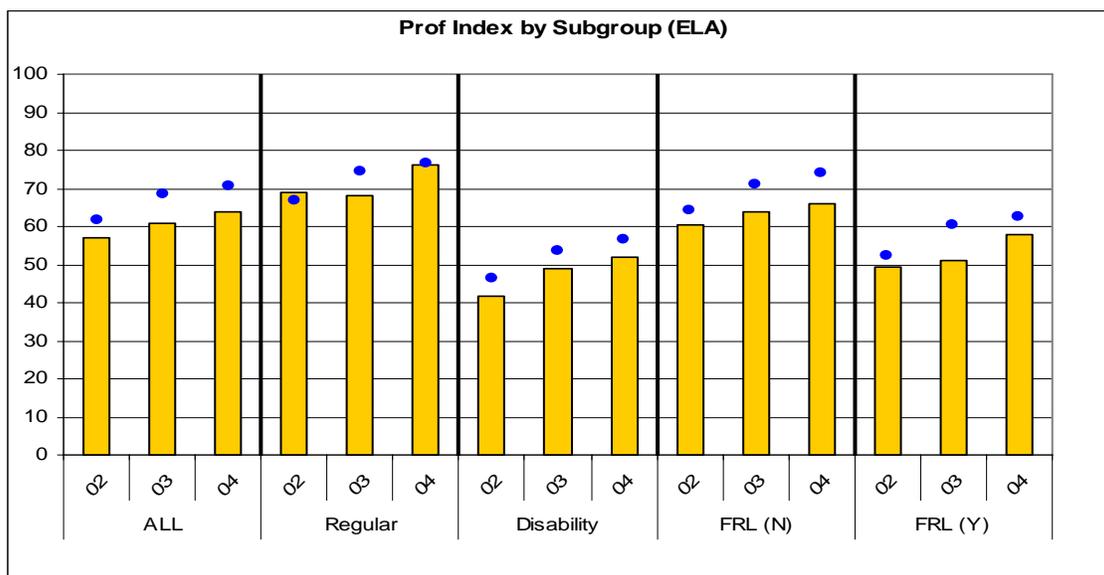
Preliminary Finding(s):

- The improvement gap in ELA was 9.7 PI points narrower in 2004 than that in 2002 in Northampton Smith
- The improvement gap in math was 5.8 PI points narrower in 2004 than in 2002 in Northampton Smith.
- The performance gap in ELA was 0.1 PI point wider in 2004 than in 2002.
- The performance gap in math was 2.1 PI points narrower in 2004 than in 2002.

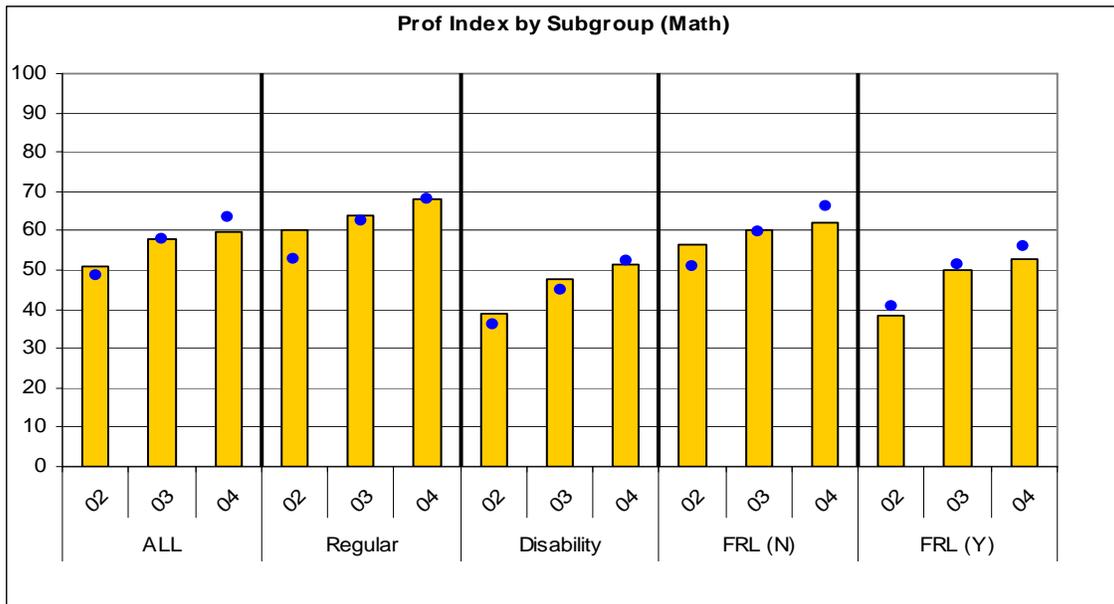
Figures 11 A, B/Table 11: MCAS Proficiency Index, by Subgroup, 2002-2004

NOTE: In the following graphs, the bars represent the individual district's performance; the dots represent the performance of all the vocational-technical schools in the state.

A.



B.



State (Voc)		ELA	Math	Smith Voc		ELA	Math
ALL	02	61.7	48.8	ALL	02	57.2	51.1
	03	68.3	57.7		03	60.7	57.7
	04	70.7	63.5		04	63.8	59.7
Regular	02	66.9	52.9	Regular	02	68.8	60.0
	03	74.4	62.6		03	68.1	64.1
	04	76.6	68.0		04	76.0	68.1
Disability	02	46.3	35.9	Disability	02	41.5	38.8
	03	53.5	44.7		03	48.8	47.5
	04	56.6	52.5		04	51.9	51.4
FRL (N)	02	64.3	51.1	FRL (N)	02	60.3	56.3
	03	71.0	59.9		03	63.8	60.1
	04	73.9	66.3		04	65.9	62.0
FRL (Y)	02	52.5	40.8	FRL (Y)	02	49.2	38.3
	03	60.4	51.2		03	51.0	50.0
	04	62.4	56.1		04	57.7	52.9

Analysis of Figures 11/A-B/Table 11:

- The proficiency gap in ELA for all students was 42.8 PI points in 2002 in Northampton Smith; in 2004, it was 36.2 PI points.
- The proficiency gap in math for all students in 2002 was 48.9 PI points and in 2004, it was 40.3 PI points.
- The subgroup performance range in ELA was 27.3 PI points in 2002; in 2004, it was 24.1 PI points.
- The sub-group range in math was 21.2 PI points in 2002 and 16.7 PI points in 2004 in Northampton Smith.
- The average gap in ELA was 14.1 PI points in 2002; in 2004, it was 14.2 PI points.
- The average gap in math was 12.7 PI points in 2002 and was 10.7 PI points in 2004 in Northampton Smith.
- The performance gap in ELA was 41.4 PI points in 2002; in 2004, it was 38.3 PI points.
- The performance gap in math was 33.9 PI points in 2002 and was 27.4 PI points in 2004 in Northampton Smith.
- The improvement gap, in ELA was 84.2 PI points in 2002; in 2004, it was 74.5 PI points.
- The improvement gap in math was 82.8 PI points in 2002 and was 67.7 PI points in 2004 in Northampton Smith.

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Overall, eligible students participated in the ELA and math assessments at required levels in Northampton Smith.

Table 12: Student MCAS Test Participation by Subject Area

	ELA	Math
T	99.77%	100.00%
NTA	0.23%	0.00%

T = Tested

NTA = Not Tested, Absent

NTM = Not Tested, Medical

NTO = Not Tested, Other

ALT = Alt. Assessment

Analysis of Table 12:

- In Northampton Smith, the 99.77 percent student participation rate on the 2004 MCAS ELA test was 4.77 percentage points higher than the state's 95 percent requirement.
- In Northampton Smith, the 100.0 percent student participation rate on the 2004 MCAS math test was 5.0 percentage points higher than the state's 95 percent requirement.

Appendix A: N- values

1. N-Values by Subgroup/Level

		ELA	Math
Smith Voc	ALL LEVELS		
	Advanced	1	2
	Proficient	24	21
	Needs Improv	57	53
	Warning/Failing	21	27
Regular	Advanced	1	2
	Proficient	20	15
	Needs Improv	25	26
	Warning/Failing	5	8
Disability	Advanced	0	0
	Proficient	4	6
	Needs Improv	32	27
	Warning/Failing	16	19
Free Lunch (Y)	Advanced	1	0
	Proficient	4	2
	Needs Improv	12	15
	Warning/Failing	9	9
Free Lunch (N)	Advanced	0	2
	Proficient	20	19
	Needs Improv	45	38
	Warning/Failing	12	18
Afr American	Advanced	0	0
	Proficient	0	1
	Needs Improv	2	0
	Warning/Failing	1	2
Hispanic	Advanced	0	0
	Proficient	1	1
	Needs Improv	4	3
	Warning/Failing	3	4
White	Advanced	1	2
	Proficient	23	18
	Needs Improv	49	50
	Warning/Failing	16	19

2. N-values by year:

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Advanced	0	2	5	3
Proficient	22	35	39	45
Needs Improvement	112	105	113	110
Warning/Failing	85	81	52	48
Total	219	223	209	206

3. N-values for NTA, NTM, and NTO by Student Status:

	ELA	Math
T. Disability	178	179
T. Regular	249	250

T = Tested

NTA = Not Tested, Absent

NTM = Not Tested, Medical

NTO = Not Tested, Other

ALT = Alt. Assessment

Notes:

In 2004, for State vs. District performance charts, only data from English and Math tests for grades 3 through 10 was included unless otherwise noted.

For Proficiency Indicator charts, Grade 3 was included. Grade 3 does not include an “advanced” level and would therefore skew aggregated proficiency level charts.

In calculation for EPI, the following groups were included for each year reported:

2001: Gr. 4, Gr. 7, Gr. 10

2002: Gr. 4, Gr. 7, Gr. 10

2003: Gr. 4, Gr. 7, Gr. 10

2004: Gr. 3, Gr. 4, Gr. 7, Gr. 10

In calculation for MPI, the following groups were included for each year reported:

2001: Gr. 4, Gr. 8, Gr. 10

2002: Gr. 4, Gr. 8, Gr. 10

2003: Gr. 4, Gr. 8, Gr. 10

2004: Gr. 4, Gr. 6, Gr. 8, Gr. 10

Subgroup inclusion was based on the number of students in a district and the number of schools in a district. To be included, a subgroup must have at least 10 times the number of schools in the district to be considered reportable. For example, in a school district with 4 schools, only subgroup categories with 40 or more students from that district in that category were included.

These results include only Students with test status of Tested, ALT, or NTA with a Scaled Score \leq 200 unless otherwise noted.

Rounded differences may result in slight discrepancies.

Part III: Domain Findings and Summary

Domain A: Assessment and Evaluation

Standards ▼ Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Domain A - Assessment & Evaluation									
S1 - Student Assessment									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	N/A	2
Poor	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	N/A	5
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
S2 - Participation									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	N/A	3
Poor	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	N/A	3
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	N/A	1
S3 - Evaluation Processes: Personnel									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Poor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfactory	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	7
S4 - Evaluation Processes: Programs, Services, & Resource Acquisition									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Poor	1	1	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	6
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0

Standard 1. STUDENT ASSESSMENT: For the period of time under examination, district and building administrators carefully administered statewide assessments and teachers regularly assessed the performance of their students relative to state and local student performance standards, and analyzed aggregate and individual assessment results to improve curricula, instructional practices, and supplementary and remedial programs.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- While the school documented increasing and decreasing assessment scores on the School Improvement Plan (SIP), it rarely evaluated the implications of the results on programs.

- Achievement of special education students was lower than that of special education students in other vocational-technical schools, and over 90 percent of the students enrolled in lower level ELA and math courses were special education students.
- Few teachers received MCAS test results, and generally, vocational and academic teachers had limited responsibility for analyzing student achievement.

Indicators:

1. The district utilized assessment policies and practices that resulted in the formal, regular evaluation of student assessment results.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school did not have written assessment policies; however, the school had a practice of evaluating student achievement both formally and regularly. The assessments in use in the school during the review period included the Grade 10 ELA and math MCAS tests, the IOWA assessment in 2001, 2002, and 2003, the High Schools That Work (HSTW) senior survey, and the National Assessment of Educational Programs (NAEP) assessments. Results from each of these assessments were included in the SIP, which was updated annually to reflect the latest scores.

Each section of the SIP included a column for the statement of the goal, the baseline data, the indicator target, and the outcome data. Instances when the outcome met the target were bolded. For example, in 2003, the target for the MCAS test scores was to improve scores by at least 5 points. The bolded type on the SIP indicated that the target was reached. Similarly the target on the IOWA assessment was to increase the scores. However, increases only occurred with the Grade 10 scores, not with either the grades 9 or 11 scores. Similarly, NAEP/HSTW scores were targeted to improve by 10 to 15 points. According to the SIP, the improvement did occur in reading and science in 2001, and only in reading in 2002.

2. In order to improve achievement for all students, the district used aggregated and disaggregated assessment scores to assess student progress for all populations. Student performance has improved across all subgroups.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The SIP and a copy of the administration’s TestWiz analysis from 2004 indicated that when analyzing assessment results, the school used only aggregate scores. Test analysis information provided for administrators and teachers did not include data for subgroup populations such as disabled students and students eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch (FRL/Y). The special services coordinator, however, did provide special education teachers with the individual scores for students in their classes or on their caseloads. During the review period, the special services coordinator was also developing benchmarks for use on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) that correlated with MCAS test scores.

Trend data analysis indicated that student achievement had improved for all students in the school, as well as for each subgroup. However, subgroup performance for disabled students and those on free and reduced lunch in ELA, while improving, were regularly lower than those in the same subgroups in all the vocational-technical schools in the state. In addition, the math Proficiency Index (MPI) showed that students with disabilities were performing slightly above vocational-technical students across the state in 2002; however, by 2004, these same students had fallen slightly below the achievement level of disabled students across the state. Finally, FRL/Y students between 2002 and 2004 also performed slightly below students in the same subgroup in vocational-technical schools across the state.

3. District and building administrators carefully and accurately implemented the “Principles of Test Administration” in their jurisdictions and provided complete and accurate information on student status and participation in accordance with the “Principles” in the administration of the MCAS test and system-wide tests.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school and its administrators implemented the Principles of Test Administration carefully and accurately. Briefings were held with staff involved in the administration of the test concerning proper protocol. Special education staff, in particular, ensured the implementation of modifications for special education students. The principal also signed and submitted the Certificate of Proper Test Administration to the Department of Education (DOE).

4. In addition to the MCAS, the district regularly employed the use of standardized tests, local benchmarks, or other assessments to measure the progress of all student populations at regular intervals and used these results to measure the effectiveness of achieving district objectives for student learning.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school used the IOWA assessment at all grades for the 2001, 2002, and 2003 school years, as well as the NAEP for its Grade 12 students. However, there were no local benchmarks in place during the review period. These standardized tests were administered annually, with the exception of the IOWA assessment in 2004. Each year in the SIP, aggregate student scores were compared against baseline scores of these assessments. Documenting achievement or lack of achievement of target indicators on the SIP was as far as the school went to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs.

5. The district engaged in a formal, documented annual review of student assessment data to reallocate staff and prioritize resource distribution to improve achievement for all student populations.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school did not engage in a formal, documented annual review of student assessment data. However, it did make some staff and resource adjustments to improve student achievement. As a result of examination of assessment results for students with disabilities, the school made staff adjustments during the 2003-2004 school year so that a certified English teacher taught special education students in courses aligned with the State Curriculum Frameworks.

During the review period, the school allocated resources to improve student achievement. When the administration eliminated basic math from the curriculum and Integrated Math I and II became the primary curriculum for instruction of lower level math students, textbooks were purchased to support the new courses. Also, to help attain the school goal of achieving industry certification in each shop area, the administration purchased new lathes in carpentry and machine technology to match curriculum competencies.

6. The district and each of its schools disseminated assessment analyses to appropriate staff at regular intervals.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The annual review of assessment data included a report by the school administration on analyzed aggregate MCAS test scores and provided an item analysis of how all participating students had answered specific questions and also how individual students had responded to each item. The principal then made a presentation to the staff as a whole concerning how the school had done with regard to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and aggregate student achievement.

The principal provided copies of the analysis to the English and math department heads as well as to administrators. The English and math department heads brought the MCAS test data to their departments for discussion and provided information to teachers concerning students in their classrooms who had failed. However, teachers in other academic areas and vocational teachers did not receive test results. Teachers were simply informed when students in their classes failed. Teachers who wanted more detailed results requested and received them. Interviewees reported that vocational teachers did not have “much ownership” of MCAS test results.

7. Assessment trend data indicated that classroom assessment standards, practices, and expectations for students were consistently linked with the learning standards articulated in the State Curriculum Frameworks.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The curriculum was not aligned with the State Curriculum Frameworks during the review period. However, some shifts did occur to bring the curriculum delivered to special education students more in line with state standards.

During the review period, a certified English teacher began to teach special education students who represented over 40 percent of the school population. As well, the content of the math and ELA courses provided for special education students became more aligned with state learning standards. However, trend data as late as 2004 did not indicate a resulting improvement in achievement data for these students. Subgroup scores for special education fell below the math achievement of special education students in other vocational-technical schools.

Between 2001 and 2004, assessment trend data for all students showed an upward trend. The percentage of ‘Proficient’ scores increased from 57.2 percent to 63.8 percent in ELA and from 51.1 percent to 59.7 percent in math. However, for all three years during the review period, the ELA performance of all students was lower than that of students in all vocational-technical schools across the state. In addition, in math in 2002, students scored above other vocational-technical schools with an average performance of 51.1 percent as opposed to 48.8 percent for that of students in other vocational-technical high schools. However, in 2003 and 2004 that trend began to reverse, and state vocational schools scored slightly higher than Smith.

Standard 2. PARTICIPATION: For the period of time under examination, the district and all of its schools had policies, procedures, and practices that met federal and state participation and attendance standards. Data on participation in state and local tests were monitored and assessed to ensure participation and opportunity for all students and all subgroups.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Northampton-Smith’s student attendance rates of 90.5 percent, 92.9 percent, and 92.5 percent in 2002, 2003, and 2004, respectively, were all lower than the state attendance standard of 93 percent and the state average of 94 percent.
- During the review period, the chronic absenteeism rate was approximately 23 percent, despite the consequences of the school’s attendance policies.
- The school did not analyze disproportionate rates of attendance, chronic absenteeism, suspensions, and dropouts for all subgroups during the review period.

Indicators:

1. The district and each of its schools had clear management systems in use that required all students to participate in all mandatory and appropriate assessments that resulted in a two- or three-year average participation rate of 95 percent in the state assessment.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Participation results in 2004 were 100 percent in ELA and 100 percent in math for students in the aggregate and in subgroups, according to DOE data. In 2003, according to DOE AYP data, 99 percent of the students in the aggregate participated in MCAS testing in ELA, and 100 percent of the students in subgroups participated. In 2003 in math, 100 percent of all students participated in MCAS testing.

Two school documents provided information that referenced the importance of MCAS testing. The District Curriculum Accomodation Plan (DCAP), in the section on parental involvement, stated that the school held MCAS test orientation nights for parents. The student/parent handbook, in the section on promotion requirements, referenced the state’s MCAS testing requirement. Interviewees provided descriptions of practices in the school which ensured student participation. For example, the notices were regularly sent home to parents for MCAS testing, and the school also implemented an automatic telephone reminder system. The principal, in a document described as the “Monday morning memo,” also encouraged teachers to remind students of upcoming MCAS testing.

2. The district and each of its schools had systems in use that required all students to participate in district and school-based assessment programs or benchmarks.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: While the school provided a limited number of assessments, administrators interviewed stated that school-based practices were in place to assure that all students received appropriate assessments. Because assessments were oriented toward individual students and were flexible in terms of when they were provided, student participation rates were high. Interviewees stated that particular attention was paid to new students, and arrangements were made by guidance counselors to have these students take, for placement purposes, the Kuder Occupational Preference Record and Iowa assessments during the spring before they entered school. Students in grades 9-11 participated in the Iowa assessment in the spring. Grade 12 students also participated in the High Schools That Work senior assessment.

School officials relied upon parent contacts, student reminders, and other strategies similar to those used with MCAS testing to ensure high percentages of student participation.

3. The district maintained clear and accurate records on student waivers for LEP and ALT status for MCAS assessment.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: No LEP students were enrolled in the school during the review period, according to interviewees. Interviewees also stated that they encouraged all students with disabilities to take the regular MCAS test. No waivers were applied for students during the review period. Interviewees also stated teachers were trained to provide the alternative assessment.

4. The district and each of its schools had clear management systems in place that required all students to attend school, and these systems were actively implemented and resulted in a student attendance rate of 93 percent or higher.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Between 2002 and 2004, DOE data indicated student attendance rates in the school were consistently below the state standard of 93 percent and the state average of 94 percent. The school rates were 90.5 percent, 92.9 percent, and 92.5 percent in 2002, 2003, and 2004, respectively. Student and parent handbooks described attendance policies in detail, which included expectations for attendance and consequences for unexcused absences. Interviewees described a process that parents and guardians followed to report absences, including telephone calls to the school and a note for an excused absence. The student/parent handbook also noted that the dean of students called to check student absences. According to the student/parent handbook, any student missing more than 10 class periods was at risk of losing course credit and of grade retention. The school had an attendance appeals process.

5. The district and its schools had and enforced, when necessary, clear consequences for students with chronic absenteeism.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: DOE data indicated that chronic absenteeism was a school problem during the review period. The percentage of chronically absent students who missed at least 10 percent of school days was 20.1 percent for Grade 9, 25 percent for Grade 10, 27.3 percent for Grade 11, and 27 percent for Grade 12 in 2003. The chronic absenteeism rate for female students was 32.6 percent and for male students was 19.7 percent. During 2004, the average student missed 12 days of school, although 25 percent of the students missed more than 18 days of school. These rates of chronic absenteeism occurred despite clear-cut consequences described in the school student/parent handbook attendance policy statements, according to interviewees. While school policy threatened the loss of credit and retention for excess unexcused absences, only 41 students were retained during the review period, an average of 3.1 percent per year.

6. The district maintained and used accurate records on attendance, suspensions, discipline, and dropouts by student subgroup populations and frequently analyzed these records to improve participation, involvement, and achievement for all students.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: Student/parent handbooks detailed policies and procedures pertaining to attendance, suspensions, discipline, detention, conduct, and promotion. However, according to interviewees, the school did not analyze data on attendance, discipline, dropouts, and suspensions for all subgroups to identify inequities.

Between 2002 and 2004, DOE data indicated student attendance rates in the school were consistently below the state standard percent and the state average. The school rates were 90.5 percent in 2002, 92.9 percent in 2003, and 92.5 percent in 2004. DOE data indicated that chronic absenteeism was a school problem during the review period. In spite of high chronic absenteeism rates and detailed attendance and promotion policies, the school retained 41 students during the review period, an average of 3.1 percent for the three years.

During the period from 2000 to 2003, the in-school suspension rate at Smith averaged 39.9 percent and the out-of-school rate suspension rate averaged 18.8 percent. Based on information furnished by the school to the DOE for 2003-2004, the out-of-school suspension rate was 24.6

percent, compared with the statewide average of 6.2 percent. Its in-school suspension rate was 44.1 percent, compared with the statewide average of 4.9 percent.

The school did not analyze trend data on disciplinary matters, and did not analyze subgroup data for dropouts to detect over-representation. According to DOE data for 2004, the rates of in- and out-of-school suspensions for female students were disproportionate to those of male students. Although females constituted 36 percent of the population, and males 64 percent, the female in-school suspension rate was 23.3 percent and the rate for males was 25.3 percent. The female out-of-school suspension rate was 42.2 percent, and the rate for males was 45.2 percent. Also, the Hispanic subgroup constituted 11 percent of the population, but this subgroup's rates of in- and out-of-school suspension were 27.5 percent and 55 percent, respectively.

The school kept cumulative lists of suspended students; however Smith did not analyze these records by subgroup, ethnicity, or gender. The special services coordinator was contacted whenever special education students were suspended, but administrators stated that the percentage of special education students suspended was not computed.

The student dropout rate increased during the review period from 3.2 percent to 4.7 percent, compared with the state average of 3.3 percent.

7. The district maintained and used clear and accurate program and individual records of all English language learners (ELLs) during the period under examination.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: During the review period, there were no ELL students enrolled at Smith. In two of the three years of this period, Smith had neither an ELL coordinator nor an ELL protocol. In 2003-2004, the special services coordinator assumed the additional role of ELL coordinator, and a written protocol for identifying, assessing, and serving ELL students was developed. Smith began annual distribution of the Home Language Survey in 2003-2004.

Standard 3. EVALUATION PROCESS/PERSONNEL: For the period of time under examination, the district used student assessment data in its development, implementation,

evaluation, and analysis of school and district personnel. The evaluation process focused on accountability for administrators, teachers, and instructional support staff, and one of the goals of the process was the improvement of achievement for all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Administrators and teachers were not held accountable for student assessment results in their evaluations.

Indicators:

1. The district and each of its schools implemented systems for the evaluation of personnel performance that were linked to student achievement data and resulted in sustained or continued improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The EQA team reviewed evaluations included in the personnel files of five administrators and 20 professional status teachers. The teacher and administrator evaluations conducted during the review period were not compliant with statute and regulations. A review of teacher evaluation procedures included in the collective bargaining agreement and interviews with school personnel indicated that, for the review period, evaluation procedures for teachers and administrators were in place. However, they were not linked to student achievement data, were not in compliance with statute or regulation, and, in general, were rarely conducted during the review period. The process observed during a review of the evaluations included in teacher personnel files was formative, in that classroom observations were the sole method of documenting teacher evaluations. The results of the classroom observation were documented using the Principles of Effective Teaching tool.

2. The district utilized evaluation procedures for administrators that were aligned with the requirements of the MGL Chapter 71, §38 and 603 CMR 35.00.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The EQA team found that administrator evaluations were not in alignment with law and regulation. All were not timely, and were not performed annually, as required by statute. The

school did not utilize the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership evaluation tool for all evaluations.

3. The form and content of the district's evaluation process for administrators was informative, instructive, and used to promote individual professional growth and overall effectiveness.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: Because administrator evaluations were not performed during the review period, they were not informative, instructive, or used to promote professional growth and effectiveness.

4. Administrators in the district were held accountable for student assessment results in their yearly evaluations.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: Because administrator evaluations were not performed during the review period, administrators were not held accountable in yearly evaluations.

5. The district utilized an evaluation procedure for teachers that was aligned with the requirements of the MGL Chapter 71, §38 and 603 CMR 35.00.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: An examination of the evaluations of a random sample of approximately 50 percent of professional status teachers indicated that they were not aligned with the requirements of the statute and regulation. While for the majority of the review period no summative evaluations of teachers were conducted, several evaluations from the early part of the period included formative evaluations, which consisted of classroom observations documented with the Principles of Effective Teaching.

6. The form and content of the district's evaluation process for teachers was informative, instructive, and used to provide professional development offerings that promoted individual growth and effectiveness.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The performance of most professional status teachers was not evaluated during the review period. While some teachers were observed in the classroom during the review period, the evaluations were formative, but not summative and prescriptive. The Principles of Effective Teaching tool was used to document the results of classroom observations.

7. Teachers in the district were held accountable for student assessment results in their respective schools and classrooms. These results were cited in the evaluation process.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: Administrators did not conduct teacher evaluations compliant with statute and regulations during the review period. In the non-compliant, formative classroom observations reviewed by the EQA, administrators did not hold teachers accountable for assessment results.

8. When evaluations were not satisfactory, after following due process, the district had and applied consequences for compensation, advancement, or employment.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: A grievance process was included in the collective bargaining agreement for teachers, and evaluations could be grieved. Teacher compensation and reemployment was not connected to performance, but was based on the negotiated collective bargaining agreement. Interviewees stated no professional status teachers had been terminated or put on improvement plans.

Standard 4. EVALUATION PROCESS/PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND RESOURCE

ACQUISITION: For the period of time under examination, the district used student assessment data in its development, implementation, evaluation and analysis of programs, services, and resource acquisition. The evaluation process focused on accountability for administrators, teachers, and staff, and one of the goals of the process was the improvement of achievement for all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The school did not have a regular systemic practice of data-driven program evaluation.
- Due to the lack of data-driven program evaluation, program evaluation results were not based on improving student achievement.

Indicators:

1. The district and each of its schools implemented a data-driven system for the evaluation of programs and services, and resource acquisition that was linked to student achievement data.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school used the SIP for data analysis. The SIP laid out each program in a chart form: outcome indicators, baseline data, target indicator, and outcome data. However, the school did not link the outcome data listed in the SIP to the evaluation of programs and resource acquisitions. Rather programs received independent, minimal evaluations. For example, at the end of each year, teachers evaluated the professional development program through the use of a survey, on which teachers evaluated the year's program and suggested topics for the following year. The school summarized and distributed the results of the survey to teachers in the next year's professional development plan. However, rather than linking professional development to student achievement, the report summarized teacher comments. The school also provided the teacher-generated list of proposed future topics that were not based on student achievement or teacher needs to improve student achievement. The administration completed the required One Year Follow-Up to determine the placement of graduates from the previous year. The follow-up for the class of 2003 listed each student by shop, whether he/she was working or not, working in the field or not, working full time, in secondary school, or the military. The data summaries listed the number of graduates contacted and the percent either working in or outside of the shop area. However, no recommendations for vocational programs came out of the follow-up study.

During the review period, the school did not evaluate the effectiveness of the co-op program. Teachers reported they were unable to make site visits, and newly appointed staff members were unable to locate data about the co-op program collected during the review period.

The school offered its students an academic support services program that consisted primarily of summer programs in 2002 and 2003. Evaluations of these programs were written in a narrative that described teacher training, student transportation issues, and disappointing student attendance. The 2002 evaluation reported student survey results that showed an increase in student confidence about being successful on the next administration. Teachers administered a pre- and post-test to students; however, the specific achievement results were not reported. The 2003 program evaluation reported that a survey was not administered. Again in 2003 pre- and post-tests were given, but student achievement results were not included in the evaluation.

The school also had an Advisory Program consisting of an Advisory Council for each shop area. During interviews, Advisory Council members reported that they had an opportunity to review their vocational area's budget and that they made some recommendations about curriculum and equipment purchases. However, the decisions were not based on student achievement.

Teachers and administrators reported little evaluation of acquired resources such as textbooks, technology, or equipment. They indicated that a great deal of thought and discussion went into decisions. However, following the use of the newly acquired resources, there was no evaluation of their effectiveness in promoting improved student achievement.

2. District and school administrators used student assessment and other pertinent data to measure the effectiveness of the district's instructional, supplemental, and support programs and services.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Teachers and administrators reported strong support for instructional programs like Writing Across the Curriculum and the use of Title I monies to provide a certified English teacher to at-risk students in developmental English. However, the school did not evaluate the performance of these programs based on assessment results. In addition, only aggregate scores were available to administrators and teachers, so the school did not perform a more finely tuned subgroup analysis to determine the impact of these instructional programs on student performance.

The school implemented the Writing Across the Curriculum program using John Collins Writing to address low student scores on open response questions. According to administrators and teachers, the Writing Across the Curriculum program was successful since individual students

scores had improved on open response items. However, the administration, teachers, and accountability team had not performed a formal analysis of the specifics of the improvements in writing scores. The SIP merely noted that a John Collins Writing consultant had performed professional development at the school several times.

The Title I program primarily supported special education students in the Developmental English program, not because of a funding decision, but due to the fact that approximately 40 percent of all Smith students were identified by their sending district as disabled and placed on IEPs. These students completed pre- and post-tests to determine growth in the course of the school year. However, since the school did not disaggregate scores, it did not use the special education subgroup scores on the MCAS test to evaluate the effectiveness of the Title I Program.

3. The evaluation results of the district's instructional, supplemental, and support programs and services were used to inform decision making and resulted in sustained or continued improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Evaluations of instructional programs based on assessments of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning did not occur. Rather, evaluations of the MCAS test academic support grants, Writing Across the Curriculum, Title I, and special education programs consisted of narratives of activities in the programs and positive impressions of program effectiveness.

4. District and school administrators used student assessment and other pertinent data to measure the effectiveness of acquired resources, including capital improvements and projects, equipment, materials, and supplies.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: According to the recent DOE Coordinated Program Review (CPR), the evaluation of equipment purchases was not systematic or consistent throughout the school. Administrators and teachers reported that, during the review period, a number of vocational area equipment needs were addressed. These equipment purchases were made to bring the shop areas up to industrial standards and to move more vocational areas toward national or state certification. According to the SIP, the auto body and automotive areas were aligned with national standards during the

review period. However, the school did not analyze the impact of the equipment purchases on student achievement or on their contribution to meeting certification standards. Also, the school did not evaluate the limited textbook and technology purchases for their effectiveness in improving student achievement.

5. The results of the district's evaluation of acquired resources, including capital improvements and projects, equipment, materials, and supplies, were used to inform decision making and resulted in sustained or continued improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: There were minimal evaluations concerning whether the acquisition of resources contributed to the improvement of student achievement. This meant that the evaluation of acquired resources did not inform decision-making.

MCAS test data showed an increase in the percent of students achieving in the 'Proficient' category between the 2003 and 2004 school years, as well as a decrease in the percentage of students achieving in the 'Failing' category. In the 2003 school year, 21 percent of the students scored at the 'Proficient' level; this percentage increased slightly in 2004 to 24 percent scoring at the 'Proficient' level. Also, in the 2003 school year, 25 percent of students scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category; this percentage decreased to 23 percent in 2004. However, a comparison of the performance of Smith students with their peers in other vocational schools during the 2003 school year showed that 31 percent of all vocational technical students in the state achieved at the 'Proficient' level, compared to 21 percent at Smith. At the same time, 24 percent of vocational-technical school students in the state failed the test, as opposed to 25 percent at Smith. In the 2004 MCAS test administration, the percentage of all vocational students in the state achieving at the 'Proficient' level increased to 35 percent as opposed to an increase of 24 percent of Smith students. At the same time, 18 percent of vocational students across the state scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category as opposed to 23 percent of Smith students.

6. When evaluations indicated that programs, services, and resource acquisition were not effective and efficient, the district made appropriate modifications and/or changes.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school made some adjustments when programs, services, and resource acquisition were not effective and efficient. However, interviews with administrators and teachers indicated there was not a systematic practice of program evaluations.

During the review period, when budget analysis indicated that maintaining a herd of cows was not cost effective, the school sold the herd. In addition, when the school understood that its special education students were not improving at an acceptable rate, it changed the content and teaching in both ELA and math classes designed for at-risk students. Also, when the school realized that the Math Across the Curriculum program, introduced in 2003-2004, was not working, it suspended its implementation pending adjustments.

However, when the 2003 New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) report indicated that the two English departments needed to be merged, the English department head reported that little was done to accomplish this. An additional NEASC report recommendation, that the school needed to address the large numbers of special education students in the Integrated Math classes, was also not addressed, according to an interview with the math department head. Similarly, when an HSTW and SIP goal called for the addition of more teachers to HSTW action teams, and the data showed an overall decrease in faculty participation, the situation was not addressed.

Domain B: Curriculum & Instruction

Standards ▼ Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Domain B - Curriculum & Instruction										
S5 – Curriculum										
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	N/A	1
Poor	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	N/A	4
Unsatisfactory	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	N/A	3
S6 - Instruction: Expectations & Policies										
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Poor	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	5
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
S7 - Opportunity & Access To Quality Education Programs										
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	N/A	3
Poor	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	N/A	4
Unsatisfactory	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	1
S8 - Professional Development & Training										
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	N/A	N/A	5
Poor	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	2
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0

Standard 5. CURRICULUM: For the period of time under examination, the district, each of its schools, and programs utilized curricula that were aligned with the State Curriculum Frameworks in the core academic subjects of English Language Arts (ELA), math, science and technology (and other tested core academic subjects as added). The curricula were current, academically sound, and clearly understood by all who administered and taught in the district.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The written curricula available in ELA and math were incomplete and provided teachers with little guidance for teaching state competencies and for horizontal alignment.
- Academic skills were not integrated into vocational courses. The curriculum documents of the vocational areas were frequently purchased, reflected the national standards of the particular vocational area, and, in some cases, considered outdated by administrators.
- The lines of responsibility in the school organizational chart and the job descriptions for the principal and curriculum coordinator positions led to a lack of curriculum leadership.

- Analysis of test scores by teachers was minimal and did not lead to curriculum revision.
- The school failed to address both the disaggregated special education results and the fact that special education students received math and English instruction in lower level classes in which they made up over 90 percent of the membership.
- The math and ELA curricula lacked the scope and sequences and pacing guides that would have assured the sequencing and alignment of learning goals.
- The school did not have a documented process involving teachers in the annual review and revision of curricula based on the analyses of results of standardized tests.

Indicators:

1. The district had written curricula for all grade levels and tested core content areas that were clearly aligned with the State Curriculum Frameworks.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: In the vocational areas, evidence of written curriculum submitted to the EQA was either a copy of the table of contents of the course textbook or a list of topics. However, onsite, each vocational area presented volumes of curriculum documentation that frequently were purchased and that reflected the national standards of the particular vocational area. Administrators agreed during interviews that in some cases these curriculum documents were “old.” In addition, competency lists presented during the EQA team tour of the vocational areas varied in quality. This inconsistency in quality had been noted in the 2003 NEASC report that referred to a lack of a consistent method to measure career and technical competencies in vocational shop programs.

A review of documents indicated that in the academic areas, curriculum was structured around a common format: Course Description, Instructional Philosophy, Course Goals, Name of Texts /Other Resources, Publications/Software, Publisher, and Assessment Measures. There was no expectation within this format that the curricula had a scope and sequence or a pacing guide. The ELA curriculum addressed each of the above required format elements for a series of units within English 9, 10, 11, and 12. However, there were no course goals for a course as a whole and no specification as to how the attainment of these goals would be assessed. Instead, the guide

contained objectives for each unit. At the Grade 11 and Grade 12 levels, English courses became “selectives,” a term used by the school. Junior and senior students chose their required English courses from a list of four possibilities. The curriculum documents listed the core competencies that each selective addressed. However, there was no separate curriculum for Grade 11 and Grade 12 for each of the selectives: Applied Communications, College Preparatory English, Creative Writing, and Journalism.

In addition, since there were two English departments, there was a separate curriculum document for the Developmental English Language Arts 9, 10, 11, and 12 courses offered for at-risk students who read below grade level. This document lacked differentiation by grade level. Developmental English alignment with the state curriculum frameworks was indicated by circling the English standard covered in the unit. The document also listed activities, which satisfied the framework standards.

Curriculum in math was even more limited. For some courses, Algebra I and Algebra II, parts A and B, course topics were listed with a hand-written notation for the week when those topics were taught. The Algebra I document included some lesson plans; geometry also included a few lessons. However, overall course objectives for the math courses in the department were not included. This focus on lesson plans, without statements of objectives for courses overall, specific measures for assessment of objectives, pacing guides, and resources, meant that the math curricula were incomplete. Indications of alignment with the state frameworks consisted of references within the topic lists to the state frameworks covered.

2. Each school in the district had a curriculum leader to oversee the use, alignment, quality, currency, and consistency of the district’s curricula.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: No single individual was the curriculum leader for the building. Curriculum responsibility was not included in the principal’s job description. In addition, since the curriculum coordinator reported directly to the superintendent and not the principal according to the organizational chart, the implication was that curriculum leadership was the superintendent’s, rather than the principal’s, domain. The curriculum coordinator’s job description referred to three of the position’s primary functions: (1) To assist academic departments in improving curriculum

delivery by working with department heads to improve curriculum; (2) to assist in curricular enhancement projects; and (3) to assist vocational departments to obtain national certifications that improve current vocational curriculum. However, in interviews, the curriculum coordinator stated that her role did not match that of a traditional curriculum coordinator. Her role was advisory, and she was available to assist department heads with curriculum upon request and did not supervise department heads; that was the role of the principal.

On the academic side, the ELA and math department heads accepted responsibility for curriculum; however, they reported to the principal who had no curriculum responsibility. They agreed that they provided new teachers with curriculum documents and vouched for the quality of the curriculum written and submitted by teachers. They also agreed that they “trusted” teachers to develop high quality curriculum. However, these department heads had full-time teaching responsibilities during the review period and had actually overseen the development of few curriculum documents. The documents produced demonstrated minimal alignment with state frameworks.

3. The district had an established, documented process that involved teachers in the annual review and/or revision of curricula based on the analyses of results of standardized tests.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The school did not have a documented process that involved teachers in the annual review and revision of curricula based on the analyses of results of standardized tests. School administrators revised the SIP annually based upon the results of the IOWA assessments, the MCAS tests, and the HSTW Grade 12 assessment. However, there was no formal process involving teachers in the review of the IOWA assessments or the Grade 12 assessment for revising curriculum. In the case of the MCAS test results, school administrators produced a limited analysis of the results and distributed the report to administrators and the math and ELA department heads. Department heads indicated that both the English and math departments engaged in some further analysis of the report provided, but the primary focus after distribution of the analysis was on notifying teachers of those students who had failed the Grade 10 test and was not focused on curriculum revision based upon the results of assessments.

The only teachers who received the MCAS test results were those in the math and English departments. Vocational teachers and teachers in academic departments other than ELA and math did not receive the MCAS test results unless they were specifically requested.

4. (In vocational districts and academic districts with Chapter 74 programs) The results of student assessment data (i.e., longitudinal, demographic, disaggregated, diagnostic, and/or surveys) and post-graduate placement data indicated that the district implemented an established process to ensure sequencing and alignment of learning goals, skills and expectations from one grade to the next in grades 9-12, and integration of academic skills, particularly in ELA, math and science and technology (and other tested core academic areas as added) into each occupational area.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The math and ELA curricula lacked scope and sequences and pacing guides, which would have assured the sequencing and alignment of learning goals. Further, interviews with teachers and documentation from the recent CPR indicated that academic skills were not integrated into each vocational area.

The Proficiency Index (PI) for the 2004 MCAS test results indicated that the PI for disabled students was 51.9 percent in ELA and 51.4 percent in math; the PI for students on free and reduced lunch (FRL/Y) was 57.7 percent in ELA and 52.9 percent in math. In contrast, the PI for regular education students was 76.0 percent in ELA and 68.1 percent in math. The PIs of student subgroups did not keep pace with those of regular education students. In addition, disaggregated trend data for Smith students indicated that, while scores were increasing, they were frequently slower than the improvement of the same subgroups in other vocational-technical schools.

5. The district's curricula in all tested content areas were aligned horizontally to ensure that all teachers of a common grade level addressed specific subject matter following the same time line, and vertically to ensure complete coverage, eliminate redundancies, and close any gaps.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The academic curriculum documents available during the review period frequently lacked scope and sequences and pacing guides as well as stated course objectives with accompanying assessment tools. In addition, according to teacher interviews, separate sections of

courses in ELA and math did not give common final exams. ELA and math department heads considered the curricula to be horizontally aligned. However, a review of the written curricula indicated that there was little of substance to enable teachers to achieve this alignment. Certainly, English courses for grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 were not aligned across the two English departments. Finally, vocational departments were so small that most often a single teacher was responsible for curriculum at a grade level, so alignment was not an issue.

For the vocational areas, the skills and competencies assigned at each grade level, though sparse, guaranteed a vertical alignment. In math, the appropriate vertical alignment was somewhat assured by the fact that courses built upon one another: Integrated Math I and II, Algebra II, parts A and B. However, the curriculum documents provided onsite were so incomplete that teachers received little guidance from them.

The articulation of unit objectives in ELA brought some definition to the vertical progression of curriculum. At the same time, however, much responsibility for further specificity of these objectives fell on the individual teacher.

6. Modifications to the curriculum resulted in improved, equitable achievement for all student populations.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: During the review period, curriculum modifications occurred in the ELA and math departments to support the HSTW goal of raising the academic standards for students. However, these modifications did not result in improved, equitable achievement for all students. For the 2002-2003 school year, the general math class was eliminated and Integrated Math I and II were substituted to provide at-risk students a curriculum which covered content required by the curriculum frameworks. Consumer math at Grade 11 was also eliminated. However, while math scores for disabled students improved, the scores dropped from slightly higher than their counterparts in other vocational-technical schools in 2002 to just lower than their peers by 2004.

During the 2002 and 2003 school years, Developmental English was taught to disabled students by a teacher not certified in English and who used a curriculum not aligned with the state frameworks. During those years, disabled students scored lower than disabled students in other vocational-technical schools. For the school year 2003-2004, the curriculum for this course was

modified and a certified teacher taught the course and incorporated several programs to improve student reading and writing skills. However, results from the 2004 school year revealed that, even though a stronger curriculum was in use, disabled students progressed at approximately the same rate as in previous years and continued to score lower than disabled students in other vocational-technical schools.

7. Staffing levels were adequate to deliver the district's curriculum to all students, as indicated by equitable rates of improvement for all student populations.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: In interviews, administrators and staff agreed that the staffing levels were adequate to deliver the school's curriculum. Although a math, science, and social studies teaching position was eliminated during the review period, the student/teacher ratio was 8.6 to 1. The math position was subsequently restored.

8. The district established practices that adequately provisioned for and supported the curriculum and its overall effectiveness in all assessed subject areas and all levels.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Technology needs at the school were great. There were several SMART Boards in evidence in the school. However, each classroom did not have a computer available for student use, and the school did not have a computer lab available for use by academic teachers and their classes. Despite these needs, during the review period, the administration did little to address the technology needs of the academic departments. In addition, interviews with the math department head confirmed the need for new geometry texts, a need supported in the recent NEASC report. However, those texts were not purchased during the review period. In contrast, however, during the same period, the vocational departments requested and received equipment to bring their programs closer to national or state certification. In addition, two vocational areas purchased new curriculum materials. Also, the English department was able to purchase additional sets of novels.

Standard 6. INSTRUCTION: EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES: For the period of time under examination, the district used the analysis of student achievement data to develop policies and documents that expressed high expectations for student achievement and clear expectations for staff in the use of effective instructional methods strategies and practices to teach all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Teachers were not trained in data analysis, and did not use student performance data strategically to plan instruction.
- School proficiency rates increased; however, the increase was not at the rate of other state vocational schools, and the gap between ELA and math scores increased.
- School technology was inadequate in both the academic and vocational areas.
- The school had neither an ELL coordinator nor an ELL protocol until the final year of the review period, and was not prepared to identify, assess, and serve ELL students.

Indicators:

1. The district had policies in place that expressed rigorous/high expectations for teachers, their work as professional educators, and the effectiveness of the instructional process.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school did not have an approved policy manual during the review period. In interviews, administrators stated that expectations for teachers were contained in the school improvement plan (SIP) which addressed standards, instruction, and school climate among other domains. According to administrators, the SIP was reviewed and updated annually in a process involving the entire staff, and it provided both direction and accountability. Department leaders discussed SIP goals at meetings with their teachers, and the principal referred to the SIP at faculty meetings to provide focus and measure results.

Instructional expectations were also discussed at in-service workshops on professional development days. The SIP committed teachers to interdisciplinary teaching in reading, writing, and math across the curriculum. New teachers were assigned a mentor for two years as part of

the school induction process. Mentors were teachers with at least three years experience who oriented their mentees to school expectations and provided support and guidance.

2. The district expected that teachers used current assessment information to plan instruction and provided teachers with support and training in this process. MCAS and other trend data indicated that the district's practices, provisioning, and support for the instructional program were sufficient, as indicated in student achievement that consistently equaled or surpassed the state averages across grade levels.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Teachers were not formally trained in data analysis. Although they were given item analyses of the MCAS test results, prepared by the principal, curriculum coordinator, and special services coordinator, teachers stated in focus groups that they did not use this information to plan lessons. Administrators examined the results of the most recent administration of the MCAS test, and did not review comparative years to detect trends and patterns. Although the school also administered the IOWA, the results were used primarily for placement of students in ELA, rather than for instructional and program planning.

According to DOE data, on the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 ELA subtest, 24 percent of the students scored in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories. This percentage was 39 percentage points lower than that of all students in the state on that subtest and 14 percentage points lower than all vocational-technical education students in the state on that subtest. On the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 math subtest, 22 percent of the students scored in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories. This percentage was 36 percentage points lower than that of all students in the state on that subtest.

3. Instructional time in each assessed content area met or exceeded state requirements in each subject area and at each level.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: According to schedules reviewed by the EQA team, the school met the 990 instructional hours requirement.

4. The district provided instructional leadership and support for strategies, techniques, and methods that resulted in improved student achievement.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: Administrators stated that the principal and curriculum coordinator provided instructional leadership collaboratively. In subsequent interviews with these individuals, however, the EQA examiners learned that the curriculum coordinator's role was advisory and that she had no authority over teachers. Upon request, the coordinator provided teachers with resources and researched best practices. Under the organizational structure, the curriculum coordinator reported directly to the superintendent and had no requirement for formal direct communication with the principal.

In focus groups, teachers stated that department heads were the instructional leaders, but department leaders did not evaluate teachers under the terms of the contract. Teachers stated that there were differences in expectations from department to department because department leaders had autonomy. Both teachers and administrators stated in interviews that department leaders checked teacher's instructional plans, and the principal also reviewed them; however, there was no standard format for lesson plans or plan books. Although administrators stated that teachers were held accountable in their evaluations for teaching standards, the school had declared a moratorium on the evaluation of professional status teachers during the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 school years while it renegotiated the process.

According to DOE data, the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 ELA scores were 39 percentage points lower than that of all students in the state and 14 percentage points lower than all vocational-technical education students in the state on that subtest. On the 2004 MCAS Grade 10 math subtest Smith students scored 36 percentage points lower than that of all students in the state.

5. The district analyzed student achievement data and allocated instructional time in the tested core content areas that resulted in improved rates of proficiency for all students.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Prior to the review period, the time allotment for ELA and math doubled from 42 to 84 minutes daily, except for Integrated Math I and II, trigonometry, and developmental math

which remained as 42 minute classes. Teachers and administrators stated that these increases were based on an analysis of aggregate scores on the MCAS tests and were proportionate to the needs.

History and science had shared an alternating long period, which was used in science for laboratory work; however, this practice was discontinued because of scheduling complications. During the review period, science laboratories were conducted during one of the science periods, reducing the overall instructional time in science.

According to data provided by the DOE, between 2001 and 2004, the EPI at the school increased by 14.7 points and the MPI increased by 11.1 points; however, the gap between the EPI and MPI increased by 3.6 points.

6. The district recognized the importance of instructional stability by not only maintaining accurate information on staff attendance but also by evaluating the effects of staff attendance on student achievement.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: According to the teachers' contract, teachers accumulated sick leave days at the rate of one day for each four months worked, and unused sick days accumulated without limit. In interviews, teachers and administrators stated that regular education teachers contacted the administrative assistant to the principal to request a substitute. The assistant assigned substitutes and tallied teacher absences.

In interviews, administrators stated that the frequency of teacher absences was not a problem; yet, the school had difficulty engaging qualified substitutes because its daily rate of pay for substitutes was not competitive with other schools in the area. When a substitute was unavailable, teachers provided one period of coverage for an absent teacher in lieu of a supervisory duty. This meant that as many as seven different teachers might provide coverage for an absent teacher. Interviewees stated that the school kept data on teacher absences, but did not analyze the data over time to detect patterns, trends, and needs. According to an analysis of raw data compiled and submitted by the school to the EQA, teacher absences for any reason during the 181 day school year averaged 14 days. The average was 13 days, discounting planned absences for professional development.

7. The district and its schools had consequences, policies, and practices that addressed patterns of staff attendance and chronic staff absenteeism.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The school did not have an approved policy manual. Administrators stated that the principal met with teachers who were repeatedly absent to determine the causes. The process was informal, and there was no written records of meetings and outcomes. Most long-term or recurrent absences were for medical reasons. The teachers' contract stated that "the superintendent or board of trustees were to be furnished with a medical certificate in the case of extended or unusual circumstances," and administrators told the EQA examiners that certificates were requested in some instances.

Administrators stated that attendance was a component of the teacher evaluation procedure; however, the EQA examiners found that regular attendance was not an explicit criteria. No evaluations of teachers with professional status compliant with statute and regulations were conducted during the 2002-2003 through the 2003-2004 school years.

8. Educational technology was available and used as an integral part of the instructional program.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: According to DOE statistics, the ratio of students to multimedia computers at the school was 3.7 to 1, compared with an average of 3.1 to 1 for all state vocational schools. During the review period, the only dedicated computer lab was converted into a classroom for Microsoft Office, multimedia, and small business electives. The library contained four-Internet connected computers. Most classrooms had one Internet connected computer. Every special education classroom was equipped with at least one computer station for student use during the review period. Computer technology was available in the shops, but administrators stated in interviews that more current technology was needed to meet industry standards.

According to the special services coordinator, special educators were provided laptop computers for writing Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) and assessment reports; however, students under special educational management needed a computer lab for instructional purposes. During

school year 2004-2005, the school purchased eighteen wireless laptop computers for classroom use that were accessible on a cart.

9. Student achievement data indicated that the district provided effective instruction, programs, and services to all English language learners.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: During the review period, there were no ELL students enrolled. In two of the three years of the review period, the school had neither an ELL coordinator nor an ELL protocol. In 2003-2004, the special services coordinator assumed the additional role of ELL coordinator, and a written protocol for identifying, assessing and serving ELL students was developed. The school began an annual distribution of the Home Language Survey in 2003-2004. According to interviewees, the school planned to train three teachers to assess second language learners during the 2005-2006 school year.

Standard 7. OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

For the period under examination, district and school policies, practices, procedures, and programs encouraged and supported equitable access to and participation in high quality educational programs for all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The school did not formally and systematically analyze data on discipline, dropouts, and suspensions by subgroup to identify inequities. Both female and Hispanic students were over-represented in suspensions.
- Despite efforts in 2002 to reduce high in- and out-of-school suspension rates, suspension rates increased in 2003.
- Despite adjustments to the math program and an emphasis on interdisciplinary writing and math, special education and low income students failed to meet the performance targets in ELA and math in 2003.

- While subgroup performance at Smith improved in both ELA and math from 2002 to 2004, improvement in ELA was not improving at the rate of all state vocational schools.

Indicators:

1. All of the students in the district graduated in their senior year. All senior students met or exceeded the state's Competency Determination.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: In the class of 2004, all but one Smith student (98 percent) met both school graduation requirements and the state's Competency Determination. This student subsequently passed the MCAS re-test, and was awarded a diploma. For the class of 2005, all Smith seniors met the Competency Determination, and 96 percent of the class of 2006 earned a Competency Determination. According to the student handbook, to qualify for both a diploma and a certificate of occupational proficiency, students were required to earn a minimum of 138 credits, including a total of fifty-one in English, math, social studies, and science; four in physical education; ten in electives; and seventy in vocational credits. The vocational credits satisfied the requirement for a certificate of occupational proficiency. The school council and HSTW overall site team recommended, and the board of trustees approved, an increase in graduation requirements to 141 credits, including three additional credits in both math and science, effective with the class of 2007.

2. The district had documented policies, practices, or procedures that addressed and supported students in transition from one level to another, one program to another, one school to another (intra district), and students entering the district after the start of school (inter district), tracked dropouts and maintained these data over time (3 years).

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Under the terms of an agreement between the school and the City of Northampton, Northampton residents were given priority for admission to the school, and non-resident students were enrolled as space allowed. In interviews with the EQA examiners, school administrators and guidance personnel described how assistance was provided to students in making transitions. The process began in the fall with visits to Grade 8 classes in Northampton and other school

schools in Hampshire County by school guidance personnel to introduce students to the mission of the school and its programs. Group tours of the school were conducted for interested students following these introductory sessions. An open house was held in March of each year for potential students and their parents. The shop and academic areas were accessible, and administrators and teachers provided explanations and answered questions. During the last week in June of each year, accepted students were given the Kidder Career Planning System, an Internet-based career interest inventory, the IOWA Tests of Basic Skills, and a locally developed math screening test. The results of these assessments were used to guide career choice and placement in freshman English and math classes.

Transitional placement meetings were held for students under special educational management to ensure continuity of services. A summer Jump Start Program, focusing on reading and math remediation was held for students who had failed the Grade 6 MCAS math test, Grade 7 MCAS ELA test, or both.

Entering Grade 9 students began the year with a family picnic on the first day of school and enrolled in the half-year Pre-exploratory Exploratory Program. During the Pre-exploratory phase in September and October, students spent a day in each of the thirteen shop programs offered at the school, and designated the four shops of highest interest to them. In the subsequent exploratory phase, the students spent one week in each of the designated shops and were evaluated by vocational educators. At the conclusion of the exploratory experience, students ranked their final shop choices and were usually accorded their first choice, except in rare instances when it was either fully subscribed, or not recommended.

Students entering the school in Grade 10 or Grade 11 were administered the career interest and placement battery, introduced to rules and expectations, and given a tour of the facility, including the shop they had chosen to attend. They shadowed another student who had been assigned to provide assistance and support during the initial week, and vocational teachers helped Grade 10 students make up Grade 9 shop hours, facilitating the transition to the school. Fewer students entered at Grade 11 because the number of shop openings was limited, particularly in popular fields such as plumbing, and because the shop hours for both grades 9 and 10 needed to be made up.

Students transferring from other vocational schools were accommodated in their major field; however, they sometimes needed to repeat the year in a grade where there was an opening if the shop was fully subscribed. If the school did not have a comparable program, students were usually accommodated at nearby vocational schools such as Franklin County and Pioneer Valley.

According to DOE statistics, 69 percent of Smith students entered the world of work upon graduation in 2002-2003. Administrators told the EQA examiners that the school provided supervised work placements through the cooperative education (co-op) program to facilitate the transition from school to work. According to administrators, approximately 70 percent of juniors and seniors participated in co-op; however, in an interview with the guidance counselor responsible and the part-time site supervisor, both of whom assumed these roles in 2004-2005, the EQA examiners learned that only 35 percent of juniors and seniors participated on average each year. Lack of transportation to job sites, lack of local placement opportunities in some fields, and lay-offs were cited as reasons for low participation.

Each shop set its own criteria for participation in co-op, resulting in variations in administration of the program. There was no supervision of work sites by school personnel up to the year 2004-2005, and no system for employers to report student absences to the school. The school did not require Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) background checks of employees who had unsupervised contact with school co-op students. According to school statistics, the special education enrollment in co-op was disproportionately low. Special education students constituted approximately 40 percent of the total population, but only 20 percent of them participated in co-op. One staff member told the EQA examiners that the program lacked rigor, consistency, and accountability.

Special education liaisons developed Chapter 688 Transition Plans for students under special educational management that required continuing assistance from the adult human services network at graduation, or upon turning twenty-two.

During the review period, the Smith dropout rate averaged 2.5 percent compared with the statewide average of 3.3 percent. Administrators stated that the school tried to prevent students from dropping out through early identification and intervention. An interdisciplinary building-based support team consisting of administrators, counselors, special educators, and the school nurse, met bi-monthly to identify students at high risk. School adjustment counselors were

assigned to counsel these students and assist their families. Some students were subsequently referred to the area's human services agencies for more intensive family counseling.

As outreach, the dean of students made home visits, and met with students and their parents at school. Dropouts were advised of their options and rights in a letter. Referrals were made to local GED programs and the Job Corps. Administrators stated that while some students returned in the following year, the school did not formally track dropouts. Counselors ascertained students' reasons for dropping out, but a withdrawal form was not maintained on file for three years. The school had few dropouts and no formal recovery program.

3. Disaggregated trend data (minimum of 3 years) indicated no differences or disproportionate rates of discipline referrals, retentions, suspensions, exclusion, or dropout rates among students of all subgroup populations.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: During the period from 2000 to 2003, the in-school suspension rate at Smith averaged 39.95 percent and the out-of-school rate suspension rate averaged 18.8 percent. Based on information furnished by the school to the DOE for 2003-2004, the out-of-school suspension rate was 24.6 percent, compared with the statewide average of 6.2 percent, and its in-school suspension rate was 44.1 percent, compared with the statewide average of 4.9 percent. In-school suspensions were for minor violations including smoking, cutting class, use of cellular telephones, wearing of hats, and detention violations. Out-of-school suspensions were reserved for more serious or recurrent offenses including assaults, endangering health and safety, and controlled substances violations.

In interviews, administrators stated that the rules in the student handbook were strictly enforced, resulting in higher suspension rates. In focus groups, however, teachers stated that expectations for student behavior varied. Some teachers permitted behaviors that others would not tolerate. They also stated that administrators enforced rules inconsistently and changed the rules. For example, penalties were not always levied for cellular telephone use, and the rule requiring students to wear identification badges was abandoned just as "most students had gotten into the habit of wearing them." In the view of these teachers, lack of common expectations, inconsistent

enforcement, and rule changes led to increases in the severity and frequency of student misbehavior.

Reduction of the number of in- and out-of-school suspensions was set forth as a goal in the SIP as revised in August 2003. According to the outcome data cited in the plan, however, from May 2002 to May 2003, days lost to in- and out-of-school suspensions increased by 56 percent; half-hour central detentions increased by 167 percent; one-hour detentions increased by 15 percent; and disciplinary referrals increased by 115 percent.

Beyond the review period, in 2004-2005, the school converted the in-school suspension room to an interim support center. A special educator supervised the setting and provided instruction to the students. The center provided an alternative to suspension for the students assigned. The school also increased an adjustment counselor position from part to full-time to increase therapeutic services for students with behavioral and emotional problems.

The school did not analyze trend data on disciplinary matters and dropouts to detect overrepresentation. According to DOE data for 2004, the rates of in- and out-of-school suspensions for female students, which were 23.3 percent and 42.2 percent, respectively, were disproportionate to those of male students, which were 25.3 percent and 45.2 percent, respectively. Females constituted 36 percent and males 64 percent of the student population. The rates of in- and out-of-school suspension for Hispanic students, 27.5 percent and 55 percent respectively, were disproportionate given that Hispanics constituted 11 percent of the student population.

The school kept cumulative lists of suspended students; however, these records were not analyzed by subgroup, ethnicity, or gender. The special services coordinator was advised whenever special education students were suspended, but administrators stated that the percentage of special education students suspended was not computed.

4. The district used aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data on participation and achievement to adjust instruction and policies for populations at risk and evaluated the effectiveness of these adjustments.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The EQA examiners determined in interviews that, during the review period, the principal, curriculum coordinator, and special education coordinator were trained in data analysis. They provided department leaders with an item analysis of the MCAS test results, and the department leaders discussed these results with the teachers in their departments. Administrators did not disaggregate the MCAS test data to determine patterns and trends in the performance of the special education and low-income subgroups. The special education coordinator examined the scores of individual students under special educational management to set benchmarks for improvement in ELA and math using the state curriculum frameworks as a reference.

School administrators stated that analysis of the MCAS test item analysis, together with recommendations from HSTW and NEASC led to curricular changes intended to improve student achievement. The general math course in Grade 9 was abolished in 2001-2002 to ensure that all students were enrolled in algebra and geometry by Grade 10. Writing and Math Across the Curriculum were introduced in 2003-2004 to increase time on task through an interdisciplinary approach.

Despite these changes, students did not meet the performance targets in ELA and math in both 2003 and 2004. In 2003, special education and low-income students met the performance targets in ELA and math. Due to an increase in the minimum number of students required to compute subgroup data from 40 to 60, no comparable information on special education and low-income students was available for 2004. According to DOE Tier I data, the proficiency gap for subgroups closed in ELA by 9.7 points and by 15.2 points in math between 2002 and 2004. The rate of closure closely matched the performance of all state vocational schools in math, but was lower than the state rate for all vocational schools in ELA.

5. Enrollment data indicated equitable participation in higher level, advanced, and AP-type courses in all assessed grade levels and programs.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school offered college preparatory courses in English, and an upper level course in math. The requirements for college prep English 11 and 12 were a qualifying grade and the prior teacher's recommendation in grades 10 and 11. Enrollment in trigonometry was determined by fulfillment of the prerequisites in the sequence. Students needed to have mastered certain skills and concepts to succeed. No advanced placement courses were offered.

Interviewees stated that students intending to apply to colleges were encouraged to enroll in college preparatory courses. Guidance personnel stated that students who did not meet the explicit criteria were encouraged to enroll if they expressed interest and were willing to make the extra effort. Parents had final authority on the placement of their children.

The school did not calculate the percentages of special education and low-income students enrolled in college prep English and upper level math courses to assess equity.

6. The district had documented policies and practices to respond to student behavior and support student needs in an equitable manner. The collective school policies, procedures, and practices addressed issues in the areas of discipline, retention, suspension, exclusion, and dropout recovery.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school did not have an approved policy manual during the review period. The student handbook contained a comprehensive explanation of student responsibilities including attendance, behavior, discipline procedures, and suspensions. The handbook was issued to all students and explained to them during the first week of school. Parents endorsed a statement indicating that they had received and reviewed the handbook and returned this acknowledgment form to the school office.

According to the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP), and confirmed in interviews with teachers and administrators, the school offered direct support to students with behavior and emotional problems, including adjustment counseling, and referrals to area human services agencies. Peer mediation, diversity, and anti-prejudice trainings were held to increase mutual understanding and to provide strategies for peaceful resolution of differences. The

interdisciplinary building-based support team made determinations of need and individually appropriate accommodations for students within regular education. Behavior plans were developed for students under special educational management.

Despite these trainings, procedures, and direct services, in 2003-2004, the out-of-school suspension rate was 24.6 percent compared with the statewide average of 6.2 percent; and the in-school suspension rate was 44.1 percent compared with the statewide average of 4.9 percent.

7. The district had policies and programs in place to address the needs of transient or mobile students. These policies and programs promoted transient student involvement in quality, challenging programs and extra curricular activities.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Administrators stated that students could enroll at the school at any time, although few enrolled after mid-year because of the need to satisfy the yearly hourly requirements for a certificate of occupational proficiency. Although there were few transient students, the school had a number of homeless students. Smith transported homeless students from shelters to maintain their enrollment, and provide supplemental supports, such as tutoring. One counselor served as the Homeless Coordinator. Administrators stated that homeless students were transported even when the school could not bill-back to recover the costs.

8. The district had policies and practices that assigned faculty to students and courses that maximized all faculty talents and skills and promoted high levels of student achievement.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Academic and vocational department heads assigned staff. Administrators told the EQA examiners that department heads recommended teacher assignments based primarily on teacher certification, experience, and strengths. The principal exercised final authority on the assignment of personnel. According to administrators, student performance data were not formally considered in making assignments. Since many departments consisted of two or three teachers, assignment options were limited.

Standard 8. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING: For the period of time under examination, the district adopted and implemented a Professional Development Plan developed through the analyses of data for all administrators, teachers, and other professional staff, paraprofessionals, and professional support teams.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Professional development was not informed by the results of program and teacher evaluations because it had suspended evaluations of teachers with professional status for most of the review period and because the school did not evaluate its academic programs, except for mandated evaluations.
- The school did not analyze the needs of the low income and special education subgroups; neither subgroup met the AYP performance target in 2003.
- Neither administrators nor teachers were trained in use of data to find answers to relevant questions about teaching and learning, and although school proficiency rates improved, the improvement was not at the rate of all state vocational schools.

Indicators:

1. The district had an annually approved professional development plan for all administrative and instructional staff employed by the district.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: During the review period, there were no ELL students enrolled. In two of the three years of the review period, the school did not have an ELL coordinator and an ELL protocol. In 2003-2004, the special services coordinator assumed the additional role of ELL coordinator, and a written protocol for identifying, assessing, and serving ELL students was developed. The school began an annual distribution of the Home Language Survey in 2003-2004.

2. The district's plan met or exceeded state requirements for resources committed to professional development, and the plan was evaluated for its effectiveness in advancing student performance.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school exceeded the foundation budget requirement for professional development in each of the years it was levied: in FY02, the school expended \$38,210 in excess of the requirement of \$13,500; in FY03, the school expended \$39,201 in excess of the requirement of \$14,700; and in FY04, the school expended \$57,453 in excess of the requirement of \$19,375. With local funds augmented by grants, the school underwrote teachers' per diem salaries for four full day and three half-day professional development courses and workshops, underwrote approved external workshop registration fees, and partially reimbursed tuitions for approved undergraduate and graduate level courses.

The professional development team surveyed the training audience to determine their satisfaction with courses and workshops, but team members told the EQA examiners that there was no formal analysis of the relationship between the professional development program and student performance. Administrators and teachers stated that the writing and math across the curriculum trainings were intended to improve student achievement in both ELA and math. According to administrators, implementation of writing across the curriculum strategies was more extensive during the review period than implementation of math across the curriculum. Yet, 2004 MCAS test results showed greater improvement in math than in ELA. In fact, the proficiency gap between ELA and math increased by 3.6 PI points.

3. The district's Professional Development program was informed by all of the following: evaluation results of personnel, programs, and services (i.e., teacher evaluations, curriculum alignment, instruction, assessment results, MCAS remediation needs), student assessment data by student subgroups, and district and school improvement plans and goals.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: According to the mission statement, the professional development plan was informed by the 1999 High Schools That Work (HSTW) Technical Assistant Visit Report; the 2002 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Report; HSTW Senior Assessment; the school technology plan; the annual faculty in-service needs assessment; the annual special education program evaluation survey; leadership team recommendations; and the most recent

MCAS test results. This was confirmed in interviews with professional development team members.

With the exception of the mandated evaluations of special education, Title I, and MCAS support services, the school did not formally evaluate its academic programs. The curriculum coordinator and department heads did not have authority to evaluate teachers, and during most of the review period, the school did not evaluate its professional status teachers in a manner compliant with statute and regulations.

Administrators did not disaggregate MCAS test data to evaluate the performance of the low income and special education subgroups. While an item analysis was used to develop IEP benchmarks for individual special education students, administrators stated that they did not examine the performance of the entire population of students under special educational management over time to determine trends and common needs.

4. The district's professional development programs included training in the teaching of the curriculum frameworks, participatory decision-making, community and parental involvement, and other skills required for the effective implementation of education reform.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Administrators and teachers told the EQA examiners, and agendas confirmed, that the school provided training for teachers on the State Curriculum Frameworks. These trainings were updated to reflect ongoing revisions. Beginning teachers were oriented to the frameworks by their department leaders.

Training in effective team membership was a component of HSTW. Since working in teams was critical to the success of HSTW initiatives, the HSTW Technical Assistant provided training for school faculty on reaching consensus and group process. Special educators were trained in conducting team meetings and strategies for resolving conflict and coming to agreement. Administrators informed school program advisory committees, composed of parents and community members, of their roles and responsibilities. Although there was no formal training in group process for committee members, administrators modeled effective discussion and decision-making skills during advisory committee meetings.

5. The district's programs included: data analysis skills for staff, the use of item analysis, and disaggregated data to address all students' achievement, accommodations for diverse styles of learning, and skill building in curriculum development, delivery, and instructional techniques.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: During the review period, teachers were not trained in data analysis. The curriculum coordinator, special services coordinator, principal, and some department heads used TestWiz software to provide teachers with an item analysis of the results of the most recent MCAS test. Administrators did not disaggregate data to determine the performance and needs of the low income and special education subgroups. In an interview with the EQA examiners, one administrator stated, "Nobody here is really trained in how to use data to ask questions and find answers."

According to documentation and interviews with teachers, during the review period, the school provided training workshops for staff on topics including Standards Based Lessons, Writing across the Curriculum, Portfolios and Best Practices, Open Response Question Format, Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA)/Skills USA, the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan, and Building Based Support Teams.

6. Administrators and teachers advanced their knowledge and skills on a regular basis by enrolling in courses that were directly related to their professional assignments.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Incentives were provided for teachers to take courses related to their professional assignments, and teachers were accountable for reporting their annual professional development activities. According to the teachers' contract, the board of trustees provided up to \$6,000 for tuition reimbursement for teachers taking courses. Tuition fees were reimbursed up to half and were approved on a first come first serve basis.

Under the terms of the contract, on January 15 and June 10 in each school year, teachers reported their professional development activities to the superintendent/director for the preceding six-month period.

The EQA examiners found teachers' individual professional development plans and semi-annual reports on professional development activities on file in the central office. Upon review, it was determined that the individual plans corresponded with the goals in the school improvement plan, and teachers' course and workshop choices were connected with their teaching assignments. In interviews, teachers stated that they were satisfied with the professional development opportunities provided under the teachers' contract.

7. Teachers were involved in the development, implementation, and assessment of the district's professional development program.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Teachers were directly involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the professional development program. Teachers constituted the majority of the professional development planning team, making up ten of the fourteen members.

The professional development planning team surveyed teachers to determine their needs. For example, the ranking choices on the survey conducted in 2004 were Technology, CPR/First Aid, Instructional Strategies for Diverse Learners, Discipline Intervention, Legal Issues in Education, and Assessment Techniques.

Following the training programs, teachers evaluated the appropriateness of the topics and the relevance of the content to student learning. Administrators stated that these evaluations were used to determine whether to offer a course again, offer it at the next level, or discontinue it because it was irrelevant or inadequate.

Domain C: Academic Support Services

Standards ▼ Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Domain C - Academic Support Services							
S9 - Student Academic Support: Programs							
Excellent	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Satisfactory	1	1	1	1	N/A	1	5
Poor	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0
S10 - Student Academic Support: Program Management & Evaluation							
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	1	1	1	0	N/A	4
Poor	0	0	0	0	1	N/A	1
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0

Standard 9. STUDENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS: For the period under examination, the district provided appropriate academic support services in ELA, math, and other core content areas for students who were not meeting state performance expectations.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Procedures were in place that monitored student progress, analyzed performance data, and provided academic support programs to students who needed assistance.

Indicators:

1. The district monitored student progress through the assessment of individual student performance data and provided students who were not proficient with additional programs and support to assist their progress.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: A review of the DCAPs and the District-Wide Success Plan for the review period, as well as interviews with school administrators, revealed that procedures were in place that monitored student progress, analyzed performance data, and provided academic support programs to students who needed assistance.

The school provided academic support services to students identified as needing assistance including, Title I services, special education services, and summer and after-school academic

support programs. Individual Student Success Plans were provided for students who failed the MCAS test.

The district-wide success plan indicated that the recommendations from sending school guidance counselors, as well as the IOWA and MCAS test assessment results were used to assess student strengths and weaknesses on the MCAS test. Interviewees indicated that the MCAS aggregated test analysis was conducted during the review period, with aggregate MCAS test results and analysis provided to teachers by the principal. The director of support services conducted subgroup analysis of the MCAS test results for students with disabilities during the latter part of the review period to update IEPs. No subgroup analysis of the MCAS test results was performed for the low-income (FRL/Y) subgroup. While most teachers were not trained in TestWiz, interviewees indicated a number of administrators who participated in DOE TestWiz training or were self-trained, including the curriculum coordinator, the director of support services, the principal, the administrative assistants to the director of support services, and the principal.

2. The district adopted and implemented a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) as a component of the District Improvement Plan (DIP) to assist principals in ensuring that all efforts were made to meet students' needs in regular education.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: A review of documents provided to the EQA indicated that a DCAP was in place during the review period and was a component of the school improvement plan (SIP). The school principal indicated that the DCAP was an important management and intervention tool that defined the accommodations in place in the school for students as well as an intervention process that assured that students at risk received support and supplementary services.

3. Components of the DCAP included the following:
 - a. direct and systematic instruction in reading;
 - b. provision of services to address the needs of students whose behavior may have interfered with learning;
 - c. provisions encouraging teacher mentoring and collaboration and parental involvement; and

- d. assistance to classroom teachers, such as professional development, to help them analyze and accommodate the needs of students.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The DCAPs provided to the EQA team for the review period included a direct and systematic reading component described as Title I technical reading and Title I developmental reading. The DCAP also included a parental involvement component which described a number of interventions with parents, including MCAS information night and numerous communication and parent conferences; also included were services for students with classroom behavior issues including adjustment counselor services, a peer mediation program, and access to a building-based support team. The DCAP also noted staff trainings were available in a number of areas, including differentiated instruction, portfolio assessment, and classroom management. Although a mentoring program was available to new teachers in the school, a specific mentoring component was not included in the DCAP, although teacher mentoring was available as a professional development offering.

4. At each grade level, the district used data available from classroom teachers, standardized tests, and local benchmarks to identify all students who are not meeting grade-level performance expectations and provided these students with sufficient supplementary and/or remedial services.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Interviews with school administrators and a review of documents provided to the EQA examiners showed that during the review period, data were available from assessments that identified students not performing at grade-level expectations including the IOWA tests, Gates-MacGinite Reading Tests, and the MCAS test. An informal practice was in place in the school where teachers of regular education students made referrals to building-based support teams to recommend strategies for improving performance. New students also were assessed to determine placement and supplementary services.

The school provided supplementary services to students identified as needing remediation including Title I services, special education services, and summer and after-school programs. During the review period, the school provided academic support programs through DOE grants.

5. Early intervention programs in literacy were provided at the primary level to ensure that by the end of Grade 3 students were reading at the ‘Proficient’ level on the MCAS test. *

*This indicator is not applicable to secondary and Vocational schools and districts.

Rating: N/A

Evidence: N/A

6. The district's MCAS success plan was approved by the Department of Education, and contained the elements articulated in MGL Chapter 69, §1I (in applicable districts only).

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: A review of documents submitted by the school, as well as interviews with administrators, indicated that the school did have a DOE approved school-wide MCAS success plan for the review period and received academic support grants during that period.

Standard 10. STUDENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION: For the period under examination, the district engaged in a comprehensive analysis of the results from student performance assessments and student needs in order to determine the content and scope of academic support services that were offered.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The school determined student academic needs through a variety of local and standardized assessments, and the identified student needs resulted in a range of support services.
- Mandated evaluations of program results were conducted indicating the percentage of students successfully passing the MCAS re-tests, the level of confidence in academic skills, and improvements in customized pre- and post-tests.
- Although improvement was observed, academic support programs did not result in a substantial improvement; the school’s average Proficiency Index was lower than the average for vocational-technical schools in Massachusetts.

Indicators:

1. The district engaged in a documented, formal, comprehensive analysis of the results from student performance assessments and student needs to determine the content and scope of academic programs and support services offered.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school determined Grade 9 student academic needs in ELA and math through a review of the statewide student achievement assessment test scores and in-coming Grade 8 student course grades. In interviews with administrators, department heads, and faculty, it was revealed that MCAS test data were not always provided by the thirty sending communities for incoming students during most of the period of review. Also, course content and grades were difficult to interpret and align for all of the sending schools. In an effort to address this deficiency, in 2003-2004 math teachers developed and implemented a 20-item math test for placement determination and administered the IOWA test to determine reading level.

Students with reading levels two to four grades lower than grade level were assigned to a developmental English course. In school years 2003 and 2004, students with reading levels five or more grades below grade level were assigned to a developmental language arts course with dual enrollment in developmental English, a special education course. Also, students were assigned to the integrated algebra and geometry math courses or the developmental math course, determined by cut scores on the math department placement test.

A summer English and math remediation program with a vocational component was offered to incoming students who were identified as at risk by Grade 8 MCAS test scores and course grades. This support program, provided only in 2002-2003, ended because of the elimination of grant funds. Prior to and during the review period, an after-school remediation program was provided for students who had not passed the Grade 10 MCAS test. Individual student item analysis using Test-Wiz data was used as a basis of instruction. Documentation of item analysis was provided. Attendance in these programs was considered insufficient by the school administration and caused by the lack of transportation. Writing Across the Curriculum using the John Collins model was implemented during the review period as was math Across the Curriculum in 2003-2004; however, the math initiative was stopped half-way through the year

due to the difficulty for the math teachers to correct assignments, according to interviewees. The school also provided Title I and special education services.

2. The district used MCAS grant funds to develop or enhance academic support programs for students scoring in 'Warning/Failing' and 'Needs Improvement' categories.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: During the review period, the school applied for and received a number of MCAS academic support grants. A review of the academic support grants program summaries and evaluation as well as interviews with administration and faculty indicated that all programs were targeted for students scoring in the 'Warning/Failing' categories. These funds provided MCAS test remediation programs during the summers of 2002 and 2003. The 2002 program included an evening session with two off-site locations. English and math remediation with a vocational component was offered to incoming students who were identified as at risk based on Grade 8 MCAS test scores and course grades. During the school year 2001-2002, the school provided English/reading and math remediation and an in-school session for the first half of the year, targeting Grade 11 students at risk for MCAS test failure. An after-school session at four off-school sites was provided during the second half of the year.

3. District and/or school administrators evaluated the overall effectiveness of its grant-funded MCAS success program.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: A review of the academic support grants program summaries and evaluation described program delivery, student results, feedback from staff, parents and students, and a summary of strengths and weaknesses. The largest barrier to student participation in the summer remediation programs was transportation. Several site locations were established and gift incentives were provided that resulted in improved attendance. Twelve students who attended the after-school program indicated that they were either very confident or somewhat confident in their academic skills by the last week of the program. In the spring of 2001, re-test passing rates were 58 percent for ELA and 60 percent for math; in the winter of 2001, 43 percent for ELA and 20 percent for math; in the spring of 2002, 50 percent for ELA and 31 percent for math. The fall

2001 in-school remediation program resulted in an 18 percent mean increase in the customized ELA pre- and post-tests and a 14.5 percent mean increase in the math pre- and post-tests.

4. The district used a range of supplemental support programs to advance student performance for those students in need. These programs were designed to address a variety of learner needs and styles in the assessed content areas.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: During interviews, administrators and department heads indicated that the school provided workshops on differentiated instruction, during the review period, to enable teachers to address student learning styles within the classroom setting. The school's course offerings included developmental English for students with reading levels two to four grades lower than grade level. In school years 2003 and 2004, students with reading levels five or more grades lower than grade level were assigned to a developmental English course with dual enrollment in a special education course entitled developmental language arts. Title I instruction provided support services. Math courses included integrated math, which consisted of algebra and geometry or a developmental math course determined by cut scores on the math department test and, in 2004-2005, the IOWA test results. During 2001-2002, the school provided English/reading and math remediation during the school day for the first half of the year, targeting Grade 11 students at risk of failing the MCAS test. An after-school session at four off-campus sites was provided for the second half of the year. Item analysis was used as the basis of modifying instructional needs for students. The school provided the EQA team a DCAP for the period of review that included a direct and systematic reading component described as Title I technical reading and Title I developmental reading.

5. Evaluations of academic support programs indicated that overall programs were efficient, managed effectively, and resulted in moving students from 'Warning/Failing' and 'Needs Improvement' to the 'Proficient' category.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school provided evaluation documents for the academic support grant programs; however, there were no formal documented evaluations performed by the school of other support programs and services.

EQA Tier I data showed that on the MCAS Grade 10 test, the percentage of all students moving from 'Warning/Failing' and 'Needs Improvement' to the 'Proficient' category was higher in 2004 than in 2001, increasing by 14 percentage points during that time period. In 2001, 90 percent of the students scored in the 'Warning/Failing' and 'Needs Improvement' categories compared to 76 percent in 2004. The percentage of students scoring in the 'Warning/Failing' category on the MCAS Grade 10 tests was 16 percentage points lower in 2004 than in 2001. However, the school's average Proficiency Index (API) on the 2002, 2003, and 2004 MCAS tests were lower than the average for vocational-technical schools in Massachusetts.

Domain D: Leadership, Governance, and Organization

Standards ▼ Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Domain D - Leadership, Governance, & Organization										
S11 - Organizational Leadership: Direction, Goal Setting, Policies, & Planning										
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Poor	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	6
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
S12 - Organizational & Human Resource Management										
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	5
Poor	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Unsatisfactory	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3

Standard 11. ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP: DIRECTION, GOAL SETTING, POLICIES AND PLANNING: For the period under examination, the district, each of its schools, and programs implemented improvement plans that were based on a comprehensive vision or mission, clear priorities for student achievement, and the analysis of recent and long-range student performance data. The district maintained organized, accessible, thorough, and complete documentation on past and current initiatives, practices, policies, procedures, and achievements of the district and its students. The implementation of improvement plans was consistently assessed and modified based on the ongoing analysis of student achievement data.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The board of trustees did not have a comprehensive policy manual to provide guidance in the administration and operation of the school.
- Although the trustees were knowledgeable about their responsibilities, they exceeded their authority by requiring their approval for all purchases greater than \$5,000 or for any purchases of an unusual nature.
- Building administrators and teachers possessed limited skills in the use of test analysis to assess and improve programs and services.
- A review of administrator personnel files revealed that several administrators did not possess the appropriate certification during the review period.

- The lack of timelines and budgets in the SIP and limited reporting to the community inhibited the extent to which the school could demonstrate the effectiveness of the SIP.
- A review of the superintendent's personnel file found no evaluations performed during the review period.

Indicators:

1. The district had a clearly understood vision and/or mission, goals, and priorities included in the District Improvement Plan (DIP). The plan and the analysis of student achievement data drove the development, implementation, and modification of educational programs, services, and practices.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school had a clearly understood mission statement that was predominately displayed in locations throughout the school, such as the cafeteria, offices, corridors, the school website, in handbooks, and in the SIP. The mission reflected the legacy of the school's benefactor, Oliver Smith, and the dual focus of occupational and academic preparation. The priorities established in the mission included: integrated instruction, experiential learning, and preparation for employment and higher education. The school was a single independent school within the jurisdiction of the city of Northampton, had a separate board of trustees, and, therefore, had no district improvement plan.

Interviews with two members of the board of trustees, administrators, and faculty revealed an understanding of the school's mission and that the SIP reflected the priorities for the direction of the school. In 1999, the school became a member of the High Schools That Work (HSTW), a national initiative to improve academic performance of vocational students and the image of vocational education. The school had incorporated the HSTW action plan document format and the action committee's participatory process into the school improvement plan development and implementation.

A review of the SIP indicated that aggregate student achievement data were used to establish outcomes rather than used to develop and implement programs, services, and practices. Interviews with administrators indicated that aggregate student achievement data were used to

measure improvement, as demonstrated with a chart showing percentage of students passing the MCAS test following each retest and for each succeeding year. Programs cited as being implemented because of student achievement data were English and math course sequencing and curriculum rigor and the introduction of instruction across the curriculum in writing, reading and math. Also, teacher and student surveys were cited as a method used to identify school needs.

The development of the SIP was the responsibility of the principal with volunteers serving on the SIP committee. Input was sought from the school improvement council, the vocational advisory committees, the board of trustees, the administrative team, the department heads, and the faculty.

2. School Committee members were informed and knowledgeable about their responsibilities under Education Reform, and relied on student achievement and other data as the foundation of their policy making and decision making.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school was a single independent school within the jurisdiction of the city of Northampton, having a separate board of Trustees in accordance with the will of Oliver Smith and Mass. General Law, Chapter 74, section 24. The trustees consisted of the mayor of Northampton, the superintendent of Northampton schools, and three members elected at large. An interview with two members of the board of trustees and a review of documentation revealed that a comprehensive policy manual to provide guidance in the administration and operation of the school did not exist. The development of a policy manual was begun during the review period and was expected to be completed by August 2005. No student achievement data were used in the policy development process, according to interviews with the superintendent and the board of trustees.

Trustees were knowledgeable regarding their responsibility to contract with the Superintendent. Also, they did not participate in the staff hiring process, except in the creation of new positions. The Trustees fully participated in the review and approval of the budget. The Trustees approved all payroll and accounts payable warrants and they exceeded their authority by approving all purchases greater than \$5,000 or unusual in nature.

The Trustees exhibited knowledge of student achievement data, budget information, student and staff activities, and the school improvement plan, as well as expressed their belief in the honesty of the administration in presenting them with data.

3. The district maintained organized, accessible, thorough, and complete documentation on past and current initiatives, practices, policies, procedures, and achievements of the district and its students.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The primary documented sources of past and present procedures and policies were student and teacher handbooks. These documents were maintained in the offices of the principal and superintendent. The business manager maintained a procedural manual on budget preparation and purchasing. The SIP contained a “current status” column that provided information on past initiatives and activities. Since a comprehensive policy manual did not exist, there was no documentation on formal past school policies.

4. An approved School Improvement Plan (SIP) for every school, aligned with the district’s plan, was in use and based on the analysis of student achievement data.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school was a single independent school within the jurisdiction of the city of Northampton, had a separate board of trustees, and, therefore, had no district improvement plan. The SIP served as the district improvement plan.

A review of the SIP indicated that aggregate student achievement data were used to establish some of the outcomes rather than to develop and implement programs, services and practices. In interviews with administrators, it was revealed that aggregate student achievement data were used to measure improvement, as demonstrated with a chart showing percentage of students passing the MCAS test following each retest and for each succeeding year.

5. District administrators, building administrators, and teachers demonstrated that they had the skills to use aggregate and individual test analyses to inform and assess the effectiveness of the planning process, and to improve instructional programs and services for all student populations.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: According to interviewees, the principal, the curriculum coordinator, and the student services coordinator were self-trained in the development and use of aggregate and individual test analyses. Through interviews with administrators and faculty, it was revealed that these individuals had been trained in TestWiz during the review period. Administrators and faculty divulged that the analysis of aggregate and individual tests for the assessment and improvement of programs and services had not been institutionalized within the school. Individual student item analysis was provided to the math and English department heads and teachers by self-trained administrators, to address student weaknesses. Through interviews with administrators and department heads, it was revealed that individual student item analysis derived from *TestWiz* was used as a basis of instruction in a grant funded after-school remediation program during 2001-2002. Also, the principal attributed the analysis of aggregate test data to changes in English and math course sequencing and curriculum rigor and the introduction of instruction across the curriculum in writing, reading, and math.

6. District leaders monitored student achievement data throughout the year, considered the goals identified in the DIP, and individual SIPs, and implemented programs, policies, and services that were most likely to result in improved student achievement.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: School administrators and faculty were provided with aggregate student achievement data, such as MCAS tests and retests received from the DOE. Some consideration was given to the SIP initiatives and implemented programs and services to improve student achievement. However, no systemic on-going review and evaluation of student achievement data was performed throughout the year.

Interviews with administrators, department heads, and faculty revealed their awareness and knowledge of the aggregate student achievement data they were provided. They were also aware of activities related to student achievement found in the SIP as well as existing programs related to student achievement. Administrator, department, and faculty meeting minutes also confirmed the discussion of student achievement data. Among the initiatives identified by the principal, and supported in administrator and faculty interviews, included changes in English and math course

sequencing, and the introduction of instruction across the curriculum in writing, reading, and math.

7. All of the district's administrators were appropriately certified.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: A review of the EQA Attachment B indicated that seven of eight administrators were certified for the positions they held. An interview with the principal revealed that the business manager was not certified; however, this was not a required certification. A review of the school's DOE staff report dated October 1, 2004, and updated January 20, 2005, indicated three licensed school administrators and five of six school administrators licensed.

Information provided by the school revealed that the superintendent held a current superintendent certification. According to information provided by the school, the Agriculture Cluster Coordinator/Lands Manager was approved, as required, as an agricultural instructor. A review of personnel files showed the Agriculture Cluster Coordinator/Lands Manager did not hold any administrator certification. The Dean of Students applied for the Principal/Assistant Principal 9-12 initial licensure on July 9, 2003, had a current "Not Ready" status and was without a waiver. The curriculum coordinator possessed a supervisor/director licensure dated September 2003, although she was hired during the 2001-02 school year.

8. The leadership reported annually to the school committee, staff, and community concerning the extent to which the implementation of the DIP and SIPs did/did not result in improved student achievement.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The principal reported annually to the board of trustees, administrators, staff and the school improvement council regarding the implementation of the SIP. No direct reporting to the community was provided. Determining the effectiveness of the SIP initiatives was hampered by the lack of SIP timelines, which created difficulty in determining the time of implementation and impact. Also, there was no reference to budget or funding requirements. The SIP indicated the "Responsible Party," "Outcome Data," "Target on Indicator," and "Baseline Data" showing progress and improvement on SIP initiatives.

9. The superintendent's performance was evaluated annually based on the district's state assessment results and implementation of the DIP. This evaluation served as the basis for setting compensation and improving the future job performance of the superintendent.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The board of trustees and the superintendent, in interviews, indicated that the superintendent's performance was evaluated every other year by the board. The superintendent's contract referenced an "annual performance evaluation." However, no policy or documentation existed for the superintendent's evaluation process or timetable. The superintendent was unable to provide an evaluation that was conducted during the review period; however, minutes from the February 25, 2003 regular meeting of the board of trustees reported on the completed evaluation, "done annually by the board of trustees." The minutes cited six categories covered in the evaluation with the superintendent scoring between "exceeded expectations" and "demonstrated outstanding performance" in all categories. It was mentioned that there were ideas and suggestions in areas needing improvement; however, no specific information was given in the minutes.

The superintendent provided an evaluation dated 2005. The instrument contained six categories including: Relationship/Communications with the board of trustees, Community Relationships, Staff and Personnel Management, Educational Leadership, Operations and Fiscal Management, and Personal qualities. Three of the five trustees participated in the evaluation, with the superintendent scoring between "exceeded expectations" and "demonstrated outstanding performance" in all categories.

During interviews with two members of the trustees and the superintendent, it was indicated that the school's state assessment results and the implementation of the SIP were not part of the evaluation and that no compensation was attached to the evaluation instrument. The superintendent's contract did provide an "option negotiating of additional increases dependent on the results of the superintendent's evaluation and the fiscal basis of the city of Northampton." The current three-year contract provided salary amounts for each year. A review of the 2005 superintendent's evaluation disclosed that direction for job performance improvement had limited specificity, in that the same language from the summative evaluation form was used to cite areas for "possible improvement."

Standard 12. ORGANIZATIONAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: For the period under examination, the district had organizational structures, policies, collective bargaining agreements, procedures, and practices with clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability. Teacher retention/turnover rates were within reason. Together, these elements promoted efficient and effective district operation and facilitated achievement for all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The divided administrative team resulted in a flawed educational and operational management system with deficiencies including a school lacking in data analysis, urgency for change, communication, curriculum coordination, principal accountability, and administrative teamwork.
- The superintendent and the principal did not feel there was an effective delegation of responsibilities in place to manage the school educationally and operationally.
- The hiring of teachers was not the responsibility of the principal and was not perceived by the principal as an open and clear process.
- No policy or written practice existed to encourage personnel to remain in the employ of the school and no retention data were provided.

Indicators:

1. The superintendent effectively delegated the educational and operational management of the schools to the building principals and program directors.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The school provided two organizational charts dated September, 2002 and July, 2004. The charts, during most of the period of review, showed the principal had direct responsibility for vocational, agricultural, and academic instructional programs, as well as for student services. The curriculum coordinator, technology coordinator, nurse, and facilities manager reported to the superintendent. The July 2004 organizational chart renamed the

agricultural coordinator position the agriculture cluster coordinator/lands manager and shifted the reporting responsibility to the superintendent.

In separate interviews with the superintendent and the principal, neither administrator felt that responsibilities were appropriately delegated for effective educational and operational management of the school. Deficiencies cited included (1) a lack of data use to drive change for students and instruction, (2) a lack of urgency to bring about improvement, (3) inadequate communications and sharing of information, (4) ineffective curriculum coordination; and (5) a lack of principal accountability, and (6) a divided administrative team.

2. The district leaders ensured that:

- a. all principals were aware of and understood published policies and district improvement plans, and
- b. the district used system-wide and intra-district communication systems to keep all faculty and staff informed and to provide avenues for response.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The principal used the student and teacher handbooks to provide a clear direction for action. No formal comprehensive policy manual existed. The development of the SIP was the primary responsibility of the principal and she was aware of and clearly understood the document. The school used a combination of paper and electronic communications, and regularly scheduled meetings to provide communications and avenues for response. The principal's "Monday Memo," electronic mail, and written memos were frequently used as indirect means of communications. Also, a series of regularly scheduled meetings for trustees, administrators, faculty, department heads, departments, and action teams provided the direct means of communications. Interviews with administrators and faculty revealed that opportunities existed for individual communication because of the size of the school.

3. The district was organized in a manner that addressed all aspects of administrative actions and had lines of responsibility. Job descriptions for all personnel were current, published, and available to all faculty and staff.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: A review of the school organizational chart indicated the establishment of administrative functions including instruction, student support services, curriculum, technology, facilities management, business management, and human services. The lines of responsibility were unclear for some of these administrative activities because reporting lines were to the superintendent and yet the responsibility for accomplishing the task rested with the principal. This situation existed for the positions of curriculum coordinator, agriculture cluster coordinator/lands manager, technology coordinator, and nurse and facilities manager. The school provided two organizational charts dated September 2002 and July 2004. The charts, during most of the review period, showed the principal had direct responsibility for vocational, agricultural, and academic instructional programs, as well as for student services. The curriculum coordinator, technology coordinator, nurse, and facilities manager reported to the superintendent. The July 2004 organizational chart renamed the agricultural coordinator position the agriculture cluster coordinator/lands manager and shifted the reporting responsibility to the superintendent. A binder of administrative job descriptions was current and available to all faculty and staff.

4. The district had practices for the recruitment and hiring of staff that involved administrative and staff participation. The process was perceived as fair and open and focused on identifying and acquiring the most qualified individuals for each position.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school had practices for the recruitment and hiring of staff that involved administrative and staff participation; however, no policy existed. Interviews with administrators and staff revealed that postings were created by the principal and reviewed by the superintendent and business manager. Applications were reviewed by the principal, department head, and sometimes an administrator who reported to the principal and a teacher with specific expertise. This group then interviewed qualified candidates. The top three candidates were determined by the principal with input from the individuals who participated in the interview. The finalists were rank ordered and provided to the superintendent. Contrary to Massachusetts law, Chapter 71, section 59B, the finalists were interviewed by the superintendent alone and the successful candidate was hired by the superintendent. Interviews with the superintendent and principal

revealed that in most cases they agreed on the final selection. The hiring process was generally perceived by the teachers as fair, open, and focused on hiring the most qualified individuals; however, the hiring of teachers was not the responsibility of the principal, and, therefore, was not perceived by the principal as an open and clear process.

5. The district employed qualified teachers who were certified in the area(s) of their primary assignment or responsibility.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Qualified teachers who were certified in the area of their primary teaching assignment were employed by the school. The EQA Attachment B indicated that of the 59 teachers employed, 56 were licensed. Four teachers were teaching out-of-field for one or more periods a day. DOE Enrollment/Indicators 2004-05 data indicated that 51 teachers taught at the school, with 94.8 percent licensed in the teaching area assigned. It also indicated that there were 14 teachers in core academic areas with 82.2 percent highly qualified. The school provided documentation for three teachers on waivers for the school year 2004-2005. Two were math teachers and one was a history/English teacher.

6. The district maintained waivers for staff regarding certification and progress toward certification.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school maintained records of staff waivers and certification progress. The EQA Attachment B indicated that four academic teachers were on waivers. The school provided documentation for three teachers on waivers for the school year 2004-2005. Two were math teachers and one was a history/English teacher. The principal was responsible for annually reviewing and updating teachers' licensure status and for reporting any neglected progress toward licensure to the superintendent. The superintendent was responsible for annually reviewing administrators' licensure status.

7. The district actively undertook efforts to provide teachers new to the district and to the profession with coaches and mentors in their respective roles.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school provided a mentoring program for new teachers during the review period. Interviews with administrators and faculty and a review of documents revealed that the mentoring program consisted of mentor training, manuals for the mentor and new teacher, required meetings, a journal of meetings, and a \$1000 stipend for mentors. The mentor selection was made by the principal with consideration given to years of experience, proximity to a new teacher, and the “highly qualified” designation.

8. The district ensured that all personnel records were carefully compiled, maintained, and available to all appropriate faculty and staff.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Faculty and staff had access to well-maintained personnel records. Personnel files were kept in the office of the superintendent’s administrative assistant and were available for review in that office area upon verbal or written request and the establishment of a mutually agreed upon time. No reference to personnel access was made in the collective bargaining agreement. The school did not have a policy for personnel records. The EQA performed a review of six randomly selected files. The files contained individuals’ original job applications and subsequent appointments, certifications and professional development/recertification documents, other position appointments, performance evaluations, and correspondence. Miscellaneous payroll related information was contained in a separate file kept in the school’s human resources office.

9. District employment policies and practices identified and encouraged skilled, qualified personnel to be appointed to and remain in the district’s employ, which resulted in a low rate of teacher and administrative turnover among qualified staff.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: No policy or written practice existed to encourage personnel to remain in the employ of the school. The DOE 2004 staff report was available to the EQA, but the school indicated,

following a request, that the report's retention section was not available and would have to be calculated. No staff retention documentation was provided.

Domain E: Business and Financial Management

Standards ▼ Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
<i>Domain E – Business & Financial Management</i>											
S13 - Budget Preparation & Development											
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	6
Poor	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S14 – Financial Asset Management											
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	N/A	8
Poor	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	N/A	1
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
S15 – Supplemental, Capital, & Facilities Asset Management											
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	N/A	7
Poor	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	1
Unsatisfactory	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	1

Standard 13. BUDGET PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT: For the period under examination, the district had a budget preparation and development process that ensured full consideration and effective use of available resources essential for district and school operations focused on student achievement. The school committee, superintendent, administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and members of the community met their responsibility to ensure that the school budget and appropriations met the educational and achievement needs of all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The school did not meet the net school spending (NSS) requirement for fiscal years 2003 and 2004; however, the city met NSS when Smith spending was combined with the city of Northampton school spending.
- The budget development process did not include the SIP or an ongoing analysis of student achievement.
- For the review period, the operating budget was level-funded at \$4,522,398 while the city’s share of the operating budget decreased from \$399,878 to \$398,139 and then to \$224,555. However, the city provided over \$800,000 in capital expenditures during the review period.

Indicators:

1. There were clear, documented policies and procedures for the development of the district's budget to ensure input from all staff.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school did not have a policy manual that addressed the development of the budget. The superintendent met with the mayor and received the schools "budget bottom line" based on what the city provided. The superintendent stated that a budget committee of the board of trustees had employed MASC to prepare a policy manual over a three-year period, which was to include budget and financial policies. A budget memo from the business manager was sent to the department leaders who prepared the department budgets. The teaching staff provided input at the request of the department leaders. The business manager and superintendent reviewed the budget of each department. The budget was presented to the budget committee at two of its meeting followed by a recommendation to the board of trustees for approval. The mayor was a member of the board of trustees.

2. Relevant budget development decisions were premised on a clear, documented systemic analysis of student performance data as well as other pertinent information.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: There was no clear documented systemic analysis of student performance data in the development of the budget. The school budget was level-funded for each of the years during the review period. Any analysis that had occurred was done on an ad hoc basis. The school reallocated funds to add a new math teacher. The superintendent stated that program changes were implemented to address the need to improve student achievement. The school committed after school and summer grant funds to support student achievement.

3. The district's budget development process was clear, document and integrated district and school improvement plans, long-term goals, and action plans.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: After a review of the budgets for the review period, it was determined that the budget development process was clear; however, in interviews with the business manager and the superintendent, it was stated that the budget development process did not integrate the SIP. A review of the SIP did not contain budget recommendations, but the school relied on HSTW as its action plan for allocating its resources.

4. The district allocated its resources based on the ongoing analysis of student assessment data in the aggregate and disaggregated by student subgroups to improve achievement for all student populations.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Interviews with administrators and a review of documents showed that resources were not allocated based on an analysis of student data disaggregated by student subgroups to improve student achievement for all student populations. Student assessment was based on the use of global analysis of the data to improve student achievement and to allocate the available financial resources.

5. The district, as part of its budget process, implemented a review process to determine the cost effectiveness of all of its programs, initiatives, and activities.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: For the review period, there was no cost effectiveness review of all programs, initiatives, and activities. However, the school had some cost-effectiveness review practices in place. The superintendent stated that, after a cost effective review of student enrollment and job placement in the metal fabrication and the dairy programs, it was recommended to the board of trustees to close these programs. The board of trustees voted to eliminate these programs resulting in savings of \$106,000 and \$60,000 respectively.

6. The district's budget document was clear, complete, current, and understandable and provided accurate information on all fund sources as well as previous history and trends.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The budget document consisted of the budget from the prior year and the recommended current budget request with variances. The budget document did not include budget information from all funding sources. In interviews with the superintendent and a member of the board of trustees, it was stated that the budget contained the necessary information for the board of trustees to make informed decisions. The board of trustees did not review or approve state and federal grants.

7. The budget and district's expenditures were adequate to provide for appropriate levels of staffing, professional development, materials, supplies, and equipment.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Based on a review of the school's End of Year Pupil and Financial Reports, professional development expenditures for FY02 and FY03, the school met the foundation requirement in those years. The school exceeded the foundation requirement for FY02. In FY02 the requirement was \$14,700. Actual expenditures were \$53,901, exceeding the requirement by \$39,201. In FY03, the required professional development expenditures were \$19,375. Actual expenditures were \$76,828, exceeding the requirement by \$57,453. Staffing ratios for FY03 were one vocational instructor for eight students, one academic teacher for 14 students, and one special needs teacher for every seven students. In interviews with the business manager, superintendent, and teachers, it was stated that supplies and materials were adequate; however, there were deficiencies in the area of technology. The city had allocated funds in its capital budget for technology.

8. The community provided financial resources to ensure an educational program of quality, as evidenced by a sufficient district revenue levy.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: For the review period, the operating budget was level-funded at \$4,522,398 while the cities share of the operating budget decreased from \$399,878 to \$398,139 and to \$224,555 respectively. However, the city provided over \$800,000 in capital expenditures during the review

period. The NSS was under the requirement by \$94,866 in FY03, and under by \$235,422 in FY04. The FY03 end of the year audit report stated, “The district is deficient by \$235,422 for the FY04. A meeting was to be held with the business manager, superintendent, mayor, and board of trustees.” In a meeting with the Mayor, it was stated that if capital cost were taken into consideration, the school would meet the NSS requirement. A letter was submitted to that department of education requesting a waiver and that capital cost be considered in the determination of NSS. No reply was received as of this review. According to the Department of Revenue (DOR), the city had \$2,235,708 in available resources for FY04. According to the DOE, the combined city educational system and Smith met the NSS requirement. The DOE planned to review the uniqueness of the school’s independent status within the city. There was a signed document by the school and city allocating the city’s charges attributed to the school; however, according to the superintendent, the allocation percentages had been used for some time and had not been verified as accurate.

9. The school committee:
 - a. reviewed and approved a budget for education in the district according to the process and timeline developed with the superintendent,
 - b. worked to ensure that necessary funds were appropriated for the district, and
 - c. maintained the balance between needs and resources in the distribution of monies, and oversaw the operation of the annual school budget.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: According to the superintendent, after receiving the mayor’s budget recommendation, the school’s budget committee had two meetings and reviewed the recommendations from the superintendent followed by approval of the budget committee’s recommendation by the board of trustees. The superintendent stated there were no specific timelines.

The board of trustees approved a level budget for each of the years during the review period. The board of trustees oversaw the budget through the approval of warrants, transfers, and monthly financial reports.

10. The district and its leadership actively pursued and developed community partnerships to expand interest and involvement in the educational system and to support the educational needs of the students and the financial needs of the system.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school pursued community partnerships to support the educational needs of the students for the review period. There were partnerships and articulation agreements with Northampton Parks and Recreation, Holyoke Community College, Springfield Technical College, Greenfield Community College, and Cooley Dickinson Hospital. Smith Charities provided educational funds to the city in the name of the school. An endowment of the Hampshire Community Action Commission provided tutors for MCAS remediation.

Standard 14. FINANCIAL ASSET MANAGEMENT: For the period under examination, the district maintained adequate accounting and financial reporting procedures. This was done to inform district-level and school-level decision-makers, to ensure effective and efficient managerial control over the use of all funds, and to improve achievement for all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- While the school lacked written policies in the areas of budgeting and finance, it had practices, guidelines, and procedures in place for expenditures and transfers.
- The school did not use student achievement data in its financial decisions.

Indicators:

1. School committee policies and guidelines, and administrative procedures were clear regarding the processes and expectations for expenditures, transfers, and investment of funds.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school did not have documented policies for expenditures and transfers. Financial policies were being developed to address all the fiscal areas at the time of the review. However, according to the superintendent, the board of trustees had long time established clear

financial guidelines and there were administrative procedures regarding the process and expectations of expenditures and transfers. The superintendent stated that all expenditures over \$5,000 and unusual items received approval of the board of trustees. The Trustees approved all transfers at the recommendation of the superintendent

2. The district exercised appropriate controls to ensure accuracy of local, state, and federal financial reports.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school used the MUNIS accounting system in conjunction with the city of Northampton to control all expenditures. In an interview with the superintendent and business manager, it was stated that it was the responsibility of the business manager to assure accuracy of local, state, and federal reports, and that the school was in compliance with the grant requirements.

3. Regular, timely, accurate, and complete financial reports were made to the school committee and the public.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: While the superintendent stated that there was no annual report prepared for the review period, the board of trustees received monthly financial budget expenditure reports and monthly tuition receipts reports. There were pending policies developed in FY04 by the policy committee of the board of trustees that required the annual report to be prepared showing “diversified activities (including financial) of the school and the superintendent’s recommendation for improvement.”

4. Required local, state, and federal financial reports and statements were filed in a timely manner.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The business manager stated that the end of the year reports were not submitted in a timely manner for the first two years of the review period. However, the school applied for and received an extension. In FY04, the end of year report was submitted in accordance with

required timeline of the DOE. The city's MUNIS financial accounting system did not have the chart of accounts required by the DOE and the end of the year reports for FY03. In FY04, the MUNIS system and chart of accounts met the requirements. According to the business manager, state and federal grant reports were submitted in a timely manner.

5. The district used efficient accounting technology that integrated district-level financial information with the financial information of each school and program, and the district used forecast mechanisms and control procedures to ensure that spending was within fiscal budget limits.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school and the city used the MUNIS financial accounting system. The school was able to provide financial information for each department and program. The city maintained control of the final school approved budget as recommended by the mayor and approved by the city council. The business manager stated that the purchase order system was used for control of expenditures. There was a partial encumbrance system for supplies and material. The business manager estimated that 70 percent of the potential of the MUNIS system had been used. In FY04, the business manager stated that the school implemented, on a trial basis, encumbrances of some of the non-professional staff. The business manager stated that MUNIS system was adequate and met the needs of the school.

6. District administrators were able to accurately track spending and other financial transactions on a regular basis.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: While the school administrators did not have access to the MUNIS accounting system to track spending, the business manager provided quarterly reports to department heads and administrators on an as needed basis.

7. The district reviewed student achievement data and the reviews were reflected in the district's financial decisions.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: Interviews with the superintendent revealed that for the review period, the school did not use student achievement data in its financial decisions. When the city approved a no-increase budget, the superintendent stated that there was reallocation of financial resources to improve student achievement. Basic math was eliminated and integrated math 1 and 2 was implemented with the purchase of math textbooks to support the program. New lathes were purchased for the carpentry and machine shop technology programs to meet industry standards. A review of class size and need for teacher aides was conducted to improve student success.

8. The district regularly employed:

- a. certified business officials,
- b. purchasing agents with MCPPO credentials,
- c. independent financial auditors and implemented their recommendations to ensure efficient and quality financial systems, and
- d. objective and independent treasurers and a separate auditor.*

*This portion of indicator 8 is applied to regional academic and vocational school districts.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: According to the business manager, the school did not employ a certified school business official. The business manager indicated plans to become certified by taking the required courses. The purchasing agent for the school was the city's authorized purchasing agent. The business manager and the city's purchasing agent had Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) credentials. An independent auditor was employed by the city and performed audits for the city and the school system.

9. The district had a system in place to:

- a. ensure that state bidding laws were followed;

- b. monitor special revenue funds, revolving accounts, and fee structures related to them to ensure that they were managed and used efficiently, and
- c. monitor and track instructional assets, such as texts, materials, supplies, and equipment to ensure efficient and maximum utilization regularly, at least every five years, competitively procure independent financial auditing services

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The city's purchasing agent was responsible for ensuring that the bidding laws were followed. The business manager prepared all bid documents for the school that were then approved by the board of trustees prior to submission to the city. The business manager provided documentation that was used by administrators to prepare bids properly. The purchase order system was used to ensure that special revenue funds, revolving accounts, and fee structures were managed in an efficient manner. The business manager stated that there was no formal procedure for tracking of instructional assets. The auditing function was the responsibility of the city. The city financial officer stated that the city had used the current auditor for many years and was satisfied with their performance.

Standard 15. SUPPLEMENTAL, CAPITAL, AND FACILITIES ASSET MANAGEMENT: For the period under examination, the district maintained adequate accounting and financial reporting procedures and used them to acquire and efficiently manage supplemental funding and to promote student achievement and accountability to the public. The condition, management, and maintenance of facilities encouraged public support for education and were conducive to promoting high levels of student achievement.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The school lacked a preventative maintenance program.
- A walk-through of the buildings and grounds revealed that, while they were of adequate size, well lit, and safe, they were generally not well cleaned or maintained.

Indicators:

1. Educational and program facilities were of adequate size, clean, safe, well-lit, maintained, and conducive to promoting the learning process.

Rating: Poor

Evidence: The facilities report provided by the school indicated that the five school buildings were in fair to good condition. The buildings were from 27 to 50 years old. According to the facilities manager, one of the buildings was not completely handicapped accessible; a walk-through of the buildings by the EQA team revealed inadequacy in the cleanliness and general upkeep of the facilities and grounds. The buildings were of adequate size, safe (a safety plan was available), and well lit. A facilities and security team, chaired by the business manager, whose purpose was to develop and implement a safe environment, met once a month and recommended to “design a program for custodial cleaning that provides accountability and develop a plan for grounds maintenance and repair and maintenance.” The most recent NEASC report stated similar concerns regarding the conditions of the building and grounds.

2. The district had a long-term capital plan that was reviewed regularly and revised as needed with input from all appropriate stakeholders.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school had a long-term capital plan that was reviewed regularly and revised annually. The vocational advisory boards made recommendations to the board of trustees on the capital needs of the vocational areas. The plan was then reviewed with the city of Northampton, which provided the financial resources for capital expenditures. The city spent over \$800,000 for capital improvement during the review period.

3. The district implemented formal preventive maintenance programs for buildings and equipment.

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: There were no documented preventive maintenance programs during the review period. The SIP stated that there was a need to develop programs for custodial cleaning, ground maintenance and repair, and to clean up the farm area. A system for continuous monitoring, up-

keep, and renewal of facilities was also needed. The most recent NEASC report made similar recommendations.

4. The district spent at least 50 percent of its combined foundation maintenance and extraordinary maintenance targets each fiscal year during the period under examination. (See 603 CMR 38.14).

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The business manager provided documentation from the DOE that indicated the school met the combined foundation maintenance and extraordinary maintenance targets. In FY03, the foundations maintenance was \$169,892, the requirement was \$84,946; and the actual spending was \$379,074. In FY04, the foundation maintenance was \$179,947, the requirement was \$89,974, and the actual spending was \$591,121.

5. The district tracked its capital assets in accordance with GASB No. 34.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The FY03 city of Northampton audit report stated that the city was in compliance with the requirements of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 34 in tracking its capital assets.

6. The district implemented procedures for the appropriate expenditure of monies from all supplemental sources of revenue, goods, services, endowments, foundations, and donations.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school had several supplementary sources of revenue, including monies from the Smith Trust Fund, Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, a tuition revolving account, and a stabilization fund established because of the sale of land to the local hospital. All expenditures were in accordance with requirements of the trusts and the purchase order system used for school-administered supplementary funds.

7. The district implemented a critical review process to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of supplemental expenditures to ensure that they were used for the purpose intended and to improve student achievement.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school had several supplementary sources of revenue including monies from the Smith Trust Fund, Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, a tuition revolving account, and a stabilization fund established because all expenditures were reviewed to assure they were used for the intended purpose and, where appropriate, to improve student achievement. There was minimum evaluation to determine the effectiveness of supplemental expenditures to improve student achievement.

8. In addition to entitlements, the district obtained competitive grants to supplement and support its efforts to improve academic achievement for all students.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school obtained a number of competitive federal and state grants. The business manager provided a list of state and federal grants showing that in FY02, the school received \$394,595, of which 18.5 percent were competitive. In FY03, the school received \$411,573, of which 8.2 percent were competitive. In FY04, the school received \$458,530 in federal and state grants, of which 9.3 percent were competitive. Several of these grants were used to support and supplement school efforts to improve student achievement for all students.

9. The district coordinated the management and use of grants in an efficient manner.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Documentation provided by the business manager and the superintendent and a review of the grant reports, showed that the grants were managed in an efficient manner and in accordance with requirements of the provisions of the grants. There was not an amount of monies returned as unexpended for the review period. The business office personnel were responsible for tracking expenditures with oversight by the business manager.

Appendix A: Proficiency Index (PI)

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 Average Proficiency Index (API), 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, $12\% \times 0 = 0$
- 15% of all students scored 210-218; therefore, $15\% \times 25 = 3.75$
- 21% of all students scored 220-228; therefore, $21\% \times 50 = 10.5$
- 34% of all students scored 230-238; therefore, $34\% \times 75 = 25.5$
- 18% of all students scored 240 or more; therefore, $18\% \times 100 = 18.0$

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 six 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: Northampton-Smith's Chapter 70 Funding and NSS FY1996-2004

FY	Foundation	Pct	Foundation	Pct	Required	Chapter	Pct	Required	Pct	Actual	Pct	Dollars	Pct
	Enrollment	Chg	Budget	Chg	Local	70 Aid	Chg	Net School	Chg	Net School Spending	Chg	Over/Under Requirement	Over/ Under
					Contribution			Spending(NSS)					
FY96	148		1,236,971		928,485	749,067		1,677,552		2,228,029		550,477	32.8
FY97	181	22.3	1,624,364	31.3	962,375	762,642	1.8	1,725,017	2.8	1,852,545	-17	127,528	7.4
FY98	194	7.2	1,748,370	7.6	1,008,762	777,192	1.9	1,785,954	3.5	1,781,991	-3.8	-3,963	-0.2
FY99	198	2.1	1,902,779	8.8	1,049,146	796,992	2.5	1,846,138	3.4	1,866,236	4.7	20,098	1.1
FY00	192	-3	1,946,234	2.3	1,098,808	873,877	9.6	1,972,685	6.9	2,235,696	19.8	263,011	13.3
FY01	180	-6.3	1,828,779	-6	954,353	905,377	3.6	1,859,730	-5.7	2,193,585	-1.9	333,855	18
FY02	147	-18.3	1,588,808	-13.1	857,658	915,417	1.1	1,773,075	-4.7	2,051,216	-6.5	278,141	15.7
FY03	155	5.4	1,756,866	10.6	1,301,348	915,417	0	2,216,765	25	2,121,899	3.4	-94,866	-4.3
FY04	156	0.6	1,891,921	7.7	1,406,040	732,334	-20	2,138,374	-3.5	1,902,952 *	-12	-265,491	-12.4
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						
FY96	8,358	5,061	15,054		60.6	135.6	180.1			33.6			
FY97	8,974	4,213	10,235		47	106.2	114			41.2			
FY98	9,012	4,006	9,186		44.5	102.1	101.9			43.6			
FY99	9,610	4,025	9,425		41.9	97	98.1			42.7			
FY00	10,137	4,551	11,644		44.9	101.4	114.9			39.1			
FY01	10,160	5,030	12,187		49.5	101.7	119.9			41.3			
FY02	10,808	6,227	13,954		57.6	111.6	129.1			44.6			
FY03	11,335	5,906	13,690		52.1	126.2	120.8			43.1			
FY04	12,128	4,694	12,006		38.7	113	99			39.1			