

# Targeted District Review Report



Wakefield Public Schools

Review conducted March 5–7, 2018

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Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

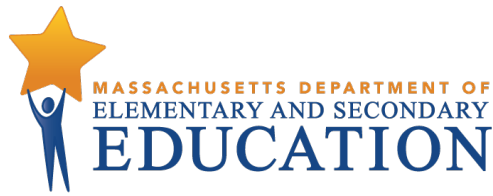
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and  
Secondary Education

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## Executive Summary

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Wakefield has a well-developed district and school-based leadership structure guided by a common vision and mission. A yearly action plan, a component of the district's planning document, which is called the 2017–2020 Instructional Strategy, guides all the district's activities, including budget decision-making. The plan is focused on three objectives each year: improving the quality of teaching, ensuring a rigorous curriculum, and individualizing student learning. At the time of the onsite review in March 2018, the plan included nine initiatives related to these objectives, including: providing meaningful feedback and job-embedded opportunities for professional growth; implementation of standards-aligned curriculum and assessments in ELA, math, and science; implementing social-emotional and health learning strategies; and developing effective inclusive practices. District leaders recognized that progress in each of the initiatives was being made in varying degrees; however, the district's planning documents did not have measures by which it could monitor its progress. The superintendent reported that the District Instructional Leadership Team tracked action steps in the district's planning documents.

The district's K–12 instructional leadership team oversees all curricular and instructional practices. Members on the team include districtwide curriculum coordinators, helping to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of curricula as well as alignment of curricula with state standards.

The 2017–2020 Instructional Strategy presents a clear path for high-quality teaching and learning and is well aligned with the district's professional development plan. Professional Learning Committees, which were developed in collaboration with teachers, meet at least once each six-day cycle K–12.

While the district has several assessment tools, the analysis of data takes place mainly at the school level through data teams. The district has not developed an effective practice for collecting, analyzing and disseminating data to effectively and efficiently guide district leaders in decision-making.

The district has developed structures that help to ensure that all students who need academic support are able to access it during the school day. The district has also strengthened its inclusion model to increase the number of students who are able to learn with their peers. The district provides supports for social-emotional health and learning. The district has low rates of suspension and dropout when compared with state averages. According to ESE data, in 2016–2017, the district's out-of-school suspension rate was 2.0 percent, compared with the state rate of 2.8 percent. The district's 2017 dropout rate was 0.2 percent compared with the state rate of 1.8 percent.

### Instruction

The team observed 70 classes throughout the district: 26 at the high school, 23 at the middle school, and 21 at the 4 elementary schools. The team observed 30 ELA classes, 23 mathematics classes, and 17 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were 15 co-taught classes. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using ESE's

Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented in Appendix C.

In observed classrooms throughout the district the quality of instruction was inconsistent. Instruction at the elementary level was generally stronger than at the middle- and high- school levels. At all levels, the classroom climate was conducive to teaching and learning.

## **Strengths**

- The district has established structures that support vertical and horizontal curricular alignment and has developed a long-range curriculum revision and materials adoption process.
- The district has developed and articulated a strategic plan for high-quality teaching and learning known as the Instructional Strategy 2017–2020. It is supported by a well-aligned professional development plan.
- In observed classrooms, routines and supports were in place to ensure appropriate student behavior and classroom climate was conducive to teaching and learning.
- The district has two embedded structures, school PLCs and school data teams, for analyzing student achievement data, benchmark data, and other pertinent data to improve student achievement.
- The district has moved to an inclusion model for students with special needs, whether academic, social-emotional or behavioral. This has increased the number of students participating in general education classes and reduced the number of students receiving pullout instruction or in substantially separate classes.
- The district has focused on the social-emotional health of its students through its planning process and through the development of programs and staffing priorities.

## **Challenges and Areas for Growth**

- In observed classrooms districtwide, the review team found that teachers did not consistently set learning expectations and check for understanding.
- In observed classrooms, the review team noted a higher incidence of students assuming responsibility for their learning and being engaged in the lesson at the elementary level than at the middle- and high-school levels.
- In observed classrooms districtwide, inclusive practices were not firmly established.

- The district is in the early stages of developing a systemwide approach to analyzing data to inform instruction and to assess program effectiveness. The district does not have a K–12 tool to organize data and generate reports.
- The district has not put in place a districtwide, coordinated system of programs and supports to ensure that all students’ academic and non-academic needs are met.
- The district’s approach to postsecondary preparation is largely focused on college planning and does not provide sufficient programs and opportunities to ensure all students are prepared for higher education and career opportunities upon graduation.

## **Recommendations**

- The district should continue to work to ensure that effective teaching and learning practices are consistently implemented districtwide.
- The district should establish a district data team. The planned district data dashboard should be completed and its purpose communicated to all stakeholders.
- The district should take steps to ensure that student support programs are well coordinated, that students experience smooth transitions between schools, and that all students are well-prepared for success after high school.

# Wakefield Public Schools Targeted District Review Overview

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## Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, targeted district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. In general, districts performing at the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile or above receive a targeted review, while lower-performing districts receive a comprehensive review.<sup>1</sup> Reviews consider carefully the effectiveness of systemwide functions, with reference to three district standards used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE). Targeted reviews address one of the following sets of three standards: **Governance and Administrative Systems** (Leadership and Governance, Human Resources and Professional Development, and Financial and Asset Management standards) or **Student-Centered Systems** (Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support standards) —and may include the team’s observations/thoughts about systems and practices in the set of standards not being addressed. All targeted reviews include finding(s) about instruction based on classroom observations. A targeted review identifies systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. The targeted district review is designed to promote district reflection on its own performance and potential next steps. In addition to being a tool that districts can use to inform their own improvement efforts, review reports may be used by ESE to identify technical assistance and other resources to provide to the district. This targeted review by the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring focused on the following standards: Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support.

## Methodology

Reviews collect evidence for each of the three district standards identified as the focus of the targeted review. Team members also observe classroom instructional practice. A district review team consisting of independent consultants with expertise in the district standards reviews documentation, data, and reports for two days before conducting a three-day district visit that includes visits to individual schools. The team conducts interviews and focus group sessions with such stakeholders as school committee members, teachers’ association representatives, administrators, teachers, students, and students’ families. Subsequent to the onsite review, the team meets for two days to develop findings and recommendations before submitting a draft report to ESE.

## Site Visit

The site visit to the Wakefield Public Schools was conducted from March 5–7, 2018. The site visit included 23 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 41 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students, students' families, and teachers’

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<sup>1</sup> Other factors are also taken into consideration when determining the type of review a district will receive.

association representatives. The review team conducted two focus groups with five elementary-school teachers and one middle-school teacher. No high-school teachers attended their focus group.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, attendance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instructional practice 70 classrooms in 6 schools. The team collected data using ESE's Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

## **District Profile**

Wakefield has a town manager form of government and the chair of the school committee is elected. The seven members of the school committee meet twice each month.

At the time of the onsite visit in March 2018, the superintendent had been in the position since 2015 and planned to retire at the end of the 2017–2018 school year. In addition to a superintendent, the district planned to hire a high school principal and an elementary school principal.

The district's instructional leadership team includes the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, six principals, the administrator of special education and student services, four assistant principals, the director of METCO (Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity), and three special education coordinators. A separate executive team consists of the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, the business manager, the administrator of special education and student services, the director of facilities and transportation, and the director of technology. Between 2014 and 2018, central office positions were stable in number. The district has six principals leading six schools. Other school administrators include assistant principals in four of the district's six schools. In 2017–2018, there were 256.9 teachers in the district.

In the 2017–2018 school year, 3,505 students were enrolled in the district's schools:

**Table 1: Wakefield Public Schools,  
Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment\*, 2017–2018**

School	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Doyle Early Childhood Center	EES	Pre-K	126
Dolbeare	ES	K–4	448
Woodville	ES	K–4	433
Greenwood	ES	K–4	221
Walton	ES	1–4	205
Galvin Middle	MS	5–8	1,044
Wakefield Memorial High	HS	9–12	1,028
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6 schools</b>	<b>Pre-K–12</b>	<b>3,505</b>
*As of October 1, 2017			

Between 2014 and 2018 overall student enrollment increased by 4.7 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English language learners (ELLs) and former ELLs) as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were lower than the median in-district per-pupil expenditures for 31 K–12 districts of similar size (3,000–3,999 students) in fiscal year 2017: \$14,147 as compared with \$14,644 (see [District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance](#)). Actual net school spending has been above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B3 in Appendix B.

## Student Performance

**Note:** The Next-Generation MCAS assessment is administered to grades 3–8 in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics; it was administered for the first time in 2017. (For more information, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/parents/results-faq.html>.) The MCAS assessment is administered to grades 5 and 8 in science and to grade 10 in ELA, math, and science. Data from the two assessments are presented separately because the tests are different and cannot be compared.

**The average scaled score on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment for all students was above the state rate by 0.2 point in ELA and by 1.9 points in math.**

**Table 2: Wakefield Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA and Math Average Scaled Score (SS) Grades 3–8, 2017**

Group	N	ELA SS	State SS	N	Math SS	State SS
High Needs	494	487.1	488.5	497	487.8	488.1
Econ. Dis.	247	491.1	489.2	247	491.2	488.1
SWD	309	482.0	480.0	312	482.4	479.8
ELLs	36	481.1	484.9	36	485.1	486.8
All	1,603	499.3	499.1	1,605	500.7	498.8

Next Generation MCAS Achievement Levels: 440–470 Not Meeting Expectations; 470–500 Partially Meeting Expectations; 500–530 Meeting Expectations; 530–560 Exceeding Expectations

**The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment in grades 3–8 was above the state rate by 1 percentage point in ELA (50 percent vs. 49 percent) and above the state rate by 4 percentage points in math (52 percent vs. 48 percent).**

- In ELA, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was above the state rate for economically disadvantaged students by 3 percentage points, equal to the state rate for students with disabilities, and below the state rate by 4 percentage points for high needs students and English language learners.
- In math, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectation was below the state rate for high needs students by 4 percentage points, and by 1 percentage point for students with disabilities and English language learners, and above the state rate by 3 percentage points for economically disadvantaged students.

**Table 3: Wakefield Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA and Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding (M/E) Expectations Grades 3–8, 2017**

Group	N	ELA M/E	State M/E	Above/Below State	N	Math M/E	State M/E	Above/Below State
High Needs	494	23%	27%	-4	497	23%	27%	-4
Econ. Dis.	247	32%	29%	3	247	30%	27%	3
SWD	309	13%	13%	0	312	13%	14%	-1
ELLs	36	19%	23%	-4	36	25%	26%	-1
All	1,603	50%	49%	1	1,605	52%	48%	4

**On the MCAS assessment in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the percentage of all students scoring proficient or advanced was 6 and 10 percentage points above the state rate in ELA and math, respectively.**

- In ELA, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced was above the state rate by 11 percentage points for high needs students and economically disadvantaged students, and above the state rate by 16 percentage points for students with disabilities.
- In math, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced was above the state rate by 10 to 15 percentage points for high needs students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities.

**Table 4: Wakefield Public Schools  
MCAS ELA and Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2017**

Group	N	ELA	State	Above/Below State	N	Math	State	Above/Below State
High Needs	60	90%	79%	11	60	68%	58%	10
Econ. Dis.	36	92%	81%	11	36	75%	60%	15
SWD	32	84%	68%	16	32	53%	42%	11
ELLs	5	--	59%	--	5	--	39%	--
All	231	97%	91%	6	231	89%	79%	10

Between 2014 and 2017, science proficiency for all students declined by 11 percentage points, improved by 3 percentage points for students with disabilities, and did not improve for high needs students.

**Table 5: Wakefield Public Schools  
MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grades 5, 8, and 10, 2014-2017**

Group	N (2017)	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
High Needs	207	33%	30%	26%	33%	0	31%
Econ. Dis.	109	--	34%	31%	41%	--	32%
SWD	129	19%	22%	19%	22%	3	21%
ELLs	8	--	--	10%	--	--	20%
All	755	65%	59%	53%	54%	-11	53%

In ELA, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment was 1 percentage point above the state rate in grades 3–8 as a whole and in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and 5 to 8 percentage points above the state rate in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, and 10 and 5 percentage points below the state rate in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, respectively.

In math, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment was 4 percentage points above the state rate in grades 3–8 as a whole and by 3 to 9 percentage points in the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades and in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, and below the state in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Table 6: Wakefield Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA and Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding (M/E) Expectations in Grades 3–8, 2017**

Grade	N	ELA M/E	State ELA	Difference	N	Math M/E	State Math	Difference
3	258	55%	47%	8	259	58%	49%	9
4	259	53%	48%	5	259	54%	49%	5
5	242	50%	49%	1	244	52%	46%	6
6	256	41%	51%	-10	256	41%	50%	-9
7	290	57%	50%	7	290	54%	47%	7
8	298	44%	49%	-5	297	51%	48%	3
3–8	1,603	50%	49%	1	1,605	52%	48%	4

Between 2014 and 2017, in science, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the MCAS assessment declined by 11 percentage points in the district as a whole and by 13 percentage points in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, and by 3 percentage points in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Table 7: Wakefield Public Schools  
MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grades 5, 8, and 10, 2014–2017**

Grade	N (2017)	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
5	243	63%	53%	46%	50%	-13	46%
8	298	50%	44%	38%	37%	-13	40%
10	214	86%	83%	78%	83%	-3	74%
All	755	65%	59%	53%	54%	-11	53%

Between 2014 and 2017, in ELA, the median student growth percentile (SGP) improved by 10 points in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and declined by 10.5 points in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Table 8: Wakefield Public Schools  
ELA Median Student Growth Percentile, 2014–2017**

Grade	N (2017)	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
4	253	56.0	47.0	64.0	55.0	-1.0	50.0
5	226	47.0	33.0	43.0	40.0	-7.0	50.0
6	246	43.5	33.0	46.0	33.0	-10.5	50.0
7	281	44.0	51.0	44.0	52.0	8.0	50.0
8	284	37.0	16.0	38.0	34.0	-3.0	50.0
10	214	46.5	47.0	28.0	56.5	10.0	50.0

Changes in SGP of 10 points or more are considered meaningful.

Between 2014 and 2017, in math, the median SGP improved by 13.0 points in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and declined by 10.0 points in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Table 9: Wakefield Public Schools  
Math Median Student Growth Percentile, 2014–2017**

Grade	N (2017)	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
4	253	56.0	40.0	69.0	54.0	-2.0	50.0
5	227	37.0	23.0	36.0	39.0	2.0	50.0
6	246	49.0	33.0	55.0	41.0	-8.0	50.0
7	281	60.0	54.0	70.0	73.0	13.0	50.0
8	283	55.0	23.0	48.0	45.0	-10.0	50.0
10	210	40.0	46.0	32.5	48.0	8.0	50.0

Changes in SGP of 10 points or more are considered meaningful.

In ELA, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment ranged from 47 to 64 percent in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and from 49 to 61 percent in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in the district's elementary schools. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 50 percent in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 41 percent in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 58 percent in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and 45 percent in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Galvin Middle.

**Table 10: Wakefield Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2017**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3–8
Doyle ECC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dolbeare	47%	49%	--	--	--	--	48%
Woodville	52%	52%	--	--	--	--	52%
Greenwood	62%	61%	--	--	--	--	62%
Walton	64%	56%	--	--	--	--	61%
Galvin Middle	--	--	50%	41%	58%	45%	49%
District	55%	53%	50%	41%	57%	44%	50%
State	47%	48%	49%	51%	50%	49%	49%

In math, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment ranged from 52 to 64 percent in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and from 46 to 68 percent in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in the district's elementary schools. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 53 percent in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 42 percent in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 55 percent in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and 52 percent in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Galvin Middle.

**Table 11: Wakefield Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2017**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3–8
Doyle ECC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dolbeare	59%	51%	--	--	--	--	55%
Woodville	52%	46%	--	--	--	--	49%
Greenwood	60%	68%	--	--	--	--	64%
Walton	64%	66%	--	--	--	--	64%
Galvin Middle	--	--	53%	42%	55%	52%	50%
District	58%	54%	52%	41%	54%	51%	52%
State	49%	49%	46%	50%	47%	48%	48%

On the MCAS assessment in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced at Wakefield Memorial High was above the state rate by 6 and 12 percentage points in ELA and math, respectively.

**Table 12: Wakefield Public Schools  
MCAS ELA and Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2017**

School	ELA	Math
Wakefield Memorial High	97%	91%
State	91%	79%

**In science, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the MCAS assessment was 51 and 37 percent in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, respectively, at Galvin Middle. Science proficiency in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Wakefield Memorial High was 84 percent.**

**Table 13: Wakefield Public Schools  
MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced by School and Grade, 2017**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	Total
Doyle ECC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dolbeare	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Woodville	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Greenwood	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Walton	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Galvin Middle	--	--	51%	--	--	37%	--	43%
Wakefield Memorial High	--	--	--	--	--	--	84%	84%
District	--	--	50%	--	--	37%	83%	54%
State	--	--	46%	--	--	40%	74%	53%

**In ELA, the percentage of all students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment ranged from 48 to 62 percent in the district’s schools.**

- The percentage of high needs students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 19 to 37 percent in the district’s schools.
- The percentage of economically disadvantaged students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 29 to 50 percent in the district’s schools.
- The percentage of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 6 to 36 percent in the district’s schools.
- The percentage of English language learners meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 6 to 33 percent in the district’s schools.

**In math, the percentage of all students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment ranged from 49 to 64 percent in the district’s schools.**

- The percentage of high needs students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 20 to 32 percent in the district’s schools.
- The percentage of economically disadvantaged students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 20 to 39 percent in the district’s schools.
- The percentage of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 9 to 32 percent in the district’s schools.
- The percentage of English language learners meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 12 to 33 percent in the district’s schools.

**Table 14: Wakefield Public Schools  
Next-Generation MCAS ELA and Math Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations by School, 2017**

School	ELA					Math				
	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	ELLs	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	ELLs
Doyle ECC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dolbeare	48%	19%	29%	6%	--	55%	24%	39%	9%	--
Woodville	52%	28%	35%	15%	33%	49%	32%	34%	21%	33%
Greenwood	62%	37%	50%	32%	--	64%	30%	20%	32%	--
Walton	61%	33%	--	36%	--	64%	28%	--	27%	--
Galvin Middle	49%	21%	30%	10%	6%	50%	20%	28%	10%	12%
District	50%	23%	32%	13%	19%	52%	23%	30%	13%	25%

Between 2014 and 2017, ELA proficiency at Wakefield Memorial High did not improve for all students and improved by 5 and 12 percentage points for high needs students and students with disabilities, respectively.

Between 2014 and 2017, math proficiency at Wakefield Memorial High improved by 1 percentage point for all students and high needs students and improved by 3 percentage points for students with disabilities.

**Table 15: Wakefield Public Schools  
MCAS ELA and Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2014–2017**

School	ELA					Math				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change
Wakefield Memorial High	97%	96%	95%	97%	0	90%	87%	84%	91%	1
High Needs	86%	81%	80%	91%	5	73%	53%	52%	74%	1
Econ. Dis.	--	86%	87%	91%	--	--	62%	70%	82%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	73%	72%	66%	85%	12	55%	32%	33%	58%	3

Between 2014 and 2017, in science, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the MCAS assessment declined by 15 percentage points at Galvin Middle and declined by 3 percentage points at Wakefield Memorial High.

- Science proficiency for high needs students declined by 2 percentage points at Galvin Middle and improved by 4 percentage points at Wakefield Memorial High.
- Science proficiency for students with disabilities declined by 5 percentage points at Galvin Middle, and improved by 25 percentage points at Wakefield Memorial High.
- In 2017, science proficiency for economically disadvantaged students was 31 percent at Galvin Middle and 68 percent at Wakefield Memorial High.

**Table 16 Wakefield Public Schools  
MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Science by School and Subgroup, 2014–2017**

School	N (2017)	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change
Doyle ECC	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dolbeare	--	--	--	--	--	--
Woodville	--	--	--	--	--	--
Greenwood	--	--	--	--	--	--
Walton	--	--	--	--	--	--
Galvin Middle	535	58%	49%	42%	43%	-15
High Needs	153	26%	23%	18%	24%	-2
Econ. Dis.	80	--	25%	25%	31%	--
SWD	97	17%	18%	11%	12%	-5
ELLs	5	--	--	0%	--	--
Wakefield Memorial High	210	87%	83%	80%	84%	-3
High Needs	46	61%	58%	54%	65%	4
Econ. Dis.	28	--	64%	54%	68%	--
SWD	24	33%	40%	46%	58%	25
ELLs	3	--	--	--	--	--

Between 2014 and 2017, the district's four-year cohort graduation rate for all students increased 2.6 percentage points, from 92.8 percent in 2014 to 95.4 percent in 2017, above the state rate of 88.3 percent. The four-year cohort graduation rates for each subgroup with reportable data improved by 2.4 to 16.6 percentage points.

**Table 17: Wakefield Public Schools  
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2014–2017**

Group	N (2017)	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
High needs	65	78.1%	77.9%	88.6%	87.7%	9.6	80.0%
Economically Disadvantaged*	49	83.0%	82.0%	87.1%	85.7%	2.7	79.0%
ELLs	2	--	--	--	--	--	63.4%
SWD	31	75.0%	72.7%	84.4%	77.4%	2.4	72.8%
African American	6	66.7%	--	100%	83.3%	16.6	80.0%
Asian	4	--	100%	88.9	--	--	94.1%
Hispanic or Latino	7	--	--	100%	71.4%	--	74.4%
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	4	--	--	--	--	--	85.2%
White	214	93.3%	93.1%	96.1%	96.7%	3.4	92.6%
All	238	92.8%	92.4%	96.1%	95.4%	2.6	88.3%

\* Four-year cohort graduation rate for students from low income families used for 2014 and 2015 rates.

Between 2013 and 2016, the district's five-year cohort graduation rate increased by 2.7 percentage points for all students, from 93.8 percent in 2013 to 96.5 percent in 2016, above the state rate of 89.8 percent.

**Table 18: Wakefield Public Schools  
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2013–2016**

Group	N (2016)	2013	2014	2015	2016	4-yr Change	State (2016)
High needs	79	86.3%	80.8%	79.1%	89.9%	3.6	82.9%
Economically Disadvantaged*	62	90.2%	87.2%	83.6%	88.7%	-1.5	82.1%
ELLs	3	--	--	--	--	--	70.9%
SWD	32	74.4%	77.8%	72.7%	84.4%	10	76.5%
African American	8	--	83.3%	--	100%	--	83.4%
Asian	9	100%	--	100%	88.9%	-11.1	94.8%
Hispanic or Latino	7	--	--	--	100%	--	76.8%
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	3	--	--	--	--	--	87.4%
White	230	93.3%	93.8%	93.1%	96.5%	3.2	93.5%
All	257	93.8%	93.7%	92.8%	96.5%	2.7	89.8%

\* Five-year cohort graduation rate for students from low income families used for 2013 and 2014 rates.

**In 2017, the in-school suspension rate for all students was 0.6 percent, below the state rate of 1.7 percent. The in-school suspension rates for each subgroup with reportable data were below the state rates.**

**Table 19: Wakefield Public Schools  
In-School Suspension Rates by Subgroup, 2014–2017**

Group	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
High Needs	1.7%	0.9%	1.2%	1.4%	-0.3	2.6%
Economically disadvantaged*	2.2%	1.0%	1.2%	1.5%	-0.7	2.9%
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	1.7%
SWD	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	0.1	3.1%
African American	--	--	2.5%	1.1%	--	3.3%
Asian	--	--	--	--	--	0.5%
Hispanic or Latino	0.0%	--	--	1.5%	1.5	2.5%
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	--	--	--	--	--	2.1%
White	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%	0.6%	0.2	1.3%
All	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.6%	0.0	1.7%

\*Suspension rates for students from low income families used for 2014 rates.

**In 2017, the district's out-of-school suspension rate for all students was 2.0 percent, below the state rate of 2.8 percent. The out-of-school suspension rates for each subgroup with reportable data ranged from 2.0 to 7.8 percent.**

**Table 20: Wakefield Public Schools  
Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Subgroup, 2014–2017**

Group	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
High Needs	4.4%	3.8%	2.5%	3.9%	-0.5	4.5%
Economically disadvantaged*	5.6%	5.6%	2.7%	3.9%	-1.7	5.3%
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	3.8%
SWD	4.9%	4.5%	3.2%	5.4%	0.5	5.5%
African American	--	--	4.9%	7.8%	--	6.3%
Asian	--	--	--	--	--	0.7%
Hispanic or Latino	4.9%	--	--	2.5%	-2.4	5.2%
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	--	--	--	--	--	3.1%
White	1.5%	1.4%	1.0%	2.0%	0.5	1.6%
All	1.7%	1.5%	1.0%	2.0%	0.3	2.8%

\* Suspension rates for students from low income families used for 2014 rates.

**In 2017, the district's dropout rate for all students was 0.2 percent, below the state rate of 1.8 percent. The dropout rates for each subgroup with reportable data ranged from 0.0 to 0.8 percent and were below the state rates for each subgroup.**

**Table 21: Wakefield Public Schools  
Dropout Rates by Subgroup, 2014–2017**

Group	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
High Needs	2.4%	1.0%	1.5%	0.4%	-2.0	3.5%
Economically disadvantaged*	1.6%	0.0%	1.7%	0.8%	-0.8	3.6%
ELLs	--	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	--	6.5%
SWD	2.6%	1.6%	1.8%	0.7%	-1.9	3.3%
African American	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	2.9%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	0.6%
Hispanic or Latino	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0	4.2%
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	1.7%
White	0.8%	0.2%	0.5%	0.2%	-0.6	1.1%
All	0.7%	0.2%	0.5%	0.2%	-0.5	1.8%

\*Dropout rates for students from low income families used for 2014 rates.

## Curriculum and Instruction

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### Contextual Background

The district has established an instructional leadership team (ILT) to oversee all curricular and instructional practices. Led by the assistant superintendent, this team is composed of the superintendent, six principals, four assistant principals, curriculum coordinators (grades 5–12), the administrator of special education and student services, the director of METCO (Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity), and the directors of performing and visual arts, guidance, and health/athletics.

#### *Curriculum*

At the elementary level, the assistant superintendent and four elementary principals have overall responsibility for curriculum oversight. A literacy coach at each elementary school and one districtwide math coach assist in supporting curriculum and instruction. For K–4 literacy, the district uses Readers and Writers Workshop; for K–4 mathematics, Pearson’s EnVision program and for K–4 science, the FOSS and McGraw Hill Science programs. At the time of the onsite review in March 2018, the district was piloting new/updated science programs. School- and grade-based professional learning community (PLC) meetings with teachers, coaches, and team leaders help ensure fidelity to the written curriculum. The curriculum coordinators (grades 5–12) have monthly meetings with the elementary coaches to help ensure vertical alignment.

At the middle school, the curriculum coordinators (grades 5–12) maintain overall responsibility for curriculum development, revision, and alignment with the Massachusetts frameworks. For ELA, the district uses Pearson’s Ready Gen (grade 5) and My Perspectives (grades 6–8) programs; in mathematics, Pearson’s EnVision program. In science, the district uses McGraw Hill’s Inspire program (grades 5–8). Fidelity to the written curriculum is ensured via PLC meetings with content area teachers and curriculum coordinators twice within each six-day cycle.

At the high school, the curriculum coordinators maintain overall responsibility for curriculum development, revision, and alignment with the Massachusetts frameworks. Curriculum coordinators, who meet once each cycle, ensure fidelity to the written curriculum. The high school uses Pearson’s My Perspectives program for its core ELA curriculum, and Pearson’s EnVision for Algebra I and Geometry. While the high school has PLCs, in-school scheduling makes it difficult in some cases, such as in algebra I, for all teachers of a particular subject to meet simultaneously. In these cases, the curriculum coordinators meet and work with the respective teachers.

#### *Instruction*

The district-level ILT oversees instruction in the district. Each school also has an ILT to disseminate the district’s strategic plan for teaching and learning, called Instructional Strategy 2017–2020, and to support the district’s instructional goals. Responsibility for instructional leadership rests with the

principals and assistant principals who regularly conduct classroom observations as well as learning walks with the superintendent and ILTs to monitor instructional practices. At the time of the review in March 2018, the district was focused on five “high leverage instructional practices: learning expectations, meeting diverse needs, student engagement, checking for understanding and growth mindset.”

The district has established an instructional coaching model using its four K–4 literacy coaches and its one districtwide math coach; all work closely with teachers to demonstrate, model, and co-teach lessons. In grades 5–12, curriculum coordinators support the district’s instructional goals by modeling lessons, conducting learning walks, and arranging peer-to-peer classroom observations. Coaches and coordinators do not evaluate teachers. Collaborative conversations about instructional practices take place at grade-level meetings and in weekly K–4 PLCs and during weekly or bi-weekly PLCs in grades 5–12.

The district uses technology to support instruction with one-to-one Chromebooks in grades 3–8, while it follows a “bring your own device” policy in grades 9–12. Chromebooks are readily available to high-school students who do not have a device. Teachers and students throughout the district communicate via Google Classroom.

The district has developed a new initiative, the Learn Anywhere Project, to support student learning beyond the school walls, and implemented it in 2017–2018. The project provides distance learning for students when school is cancelled. It also provides online learning and personalized summer learning opportunities for students.

## **Strength Findings**

- 1. The district has established structures that support vertical and horizontal curricular alignment and has developed a long-range curriculum revision and materials adoption process.**
  - A.** As the leader of the district’s Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), the assistant superintendent meets monthly with all curriculum coordinators, principals, directors, and the administrator of special education and student services to focus on curriculum and instruction. Meetings with a curricular focus also take place at the school level.
    1. Curriculum coordinators (grades 5–12) for ELA, math, science, and world language oversee the development, revision, and implementation of curriculum in their respective content areas. A review of district documents indicated that curriculum coordinators were responsible for ensuring that the curriculum was aligned with the Massachusetts frameworks, and for curriculum mapping, coaching, supporting peer modeling, meeting with principals, and providing budgetary input.
      - a. A document review indicated that the four curriculum coordinators reported directly to the assistant superintendent.

2. At the four elementary schools, literacy coaches provide further support with curriculum implementation and fidelity; the district has one districtwide math coach.
    - a. The literacy coach from each school meets in a professional learning community (PLC) with the curriculum coordinators to ensure vertical alignment of the curriculum.
    - b. Each literacy coach also provides professional development and lesson modeling to individual teachers or groups as needed.
    - c. Elementary coaches stated that they also met once per six-day cycle to discuss the needs of teachers and students, and the implementation of the new reading program.
    - d. The districtwide math coach meets with grade-level PLCs as needed and as time permits. This coach also provides professional development (PD) and lesson modeling to individual teachers or groups, as warranted.
  3. The high-school ILT, composed of the curriculum coordinators, the principal, and department heads, meets once every six days.
    - a. The curriculum coordinators meet with principals and high-school department coordinators to help ensure effective delivery of the curriculum and provide PD in each content area, as warranted.
    - b. The curriculum coordinators meet once per month with the elementary literacy coaches and the districtwide math coach to help ensure horizontal alignment of curriculum and instruction in preparation for the transition to grade 5 at the middle school.
- B.** A document review indicated that the district’s strategic plan, Instructional Strategy 2017–2020, includes curriculum revision and materials adoption initiatives and action plans. (See the Strength finding below.)
1. For the 2017–2018 school year, the curriculum-related initiatives were:
    - implement consistent, high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum and assessments in ELA, math, and science
    - review and research world language frameworks and curriculum to make recommendations for 2018–2019 and
    - integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century digital learning tools to enrich and personalize the student learning experience.
  2. The action plans include staff responsible for each action step within the curriculum section.

3. At the time of the review in March 2018, the district planned in the summer 2018 to conduct curriculum workshops for teachers to review curriculum alignment with the current frameworks.
  4. The district closely monitors the progress that it has achieved in relation to each curricular goal and action step and color-codes progress as green, yellow, or red.
- C. The district has a long-range plan (2013–2022) and process for revising curriculum and updating instructional materials.
1. The district’s curriculum revision plan has five phases: research and review current standards and district instructional practices; identify appropriate materials and instruction; implementation; implementation, monitor student growth, and adjust materials; and assessment and evaluation of improvements.
  2. School administrators said that with the support of the town, the district has been able to stay true to its materials adoption plan.
- D. Teachers said that the district’s Instructional Strategy and curriculum revision plans helped them to be focused in their work, to receive targeted PD, and to participate in PLCs that are “connected to student growth.”

**Impact:** The district’s organizational structures support strong curricular alignment, consistent delivery, and a continuously improving curriculum. The district’s curricular leadership structure facilitates communication among all instructional staff. The development of and adherence to a curriculum review cycle likely assists in the development and maintenance of a strong instructional program with relevant materials promoting improved student learning.

**2. The district has developed and articulated a strategic plan for high-quality teaching and learning known as the Instructional Strategy 2017–2020. It is supported by a well-aligned professional development plan.**

- A. The district’s Instructional Strategy 2017–2020 outlines the district’s teaching and learning objectives and initiatives as well as its core values, vision, and mission. The district’s teaching and learning action plans for quality teaching, rigorous curriculum, and individualized student learning detail how the strategy will be realized.
1. The document states that the district’s vision and core values emphasize a love of learning and a culture of respect and caring.
  2. The Instructional Strategy links the district’s teaching and learning objectives to three annually developed initiatives.

- a. In 2017–2018, the initiatives for quality teaching were: fostering educator growth through quality feedback, providing job-embedded professional development (PD), and building the capacity of each school with five high-leverage instructional practices.
  - b. The five high-leverage instructional practices are learning expectations, meeting diverse needs, student engagement, checking for understanding, and growth mindset. School leaders and teachers across the district identified these five high-leverage instructional practices as the district’s instructional expectations.
    - i. The five high-leverage instructional practices are aligned with the Massachusetts educator evaluation rubric. Evaluators participate in monthly PD to calibrate expectations about these five high-leverage instructional practices.
    - ii. Principals and teachers stated that evaluators conducted six observations per year to provide targeted and actionable feedback to teachers on these practices.
    - iii. Each district school identified one of the five high-leverage instructional practices to target during the 2017–2018 school year. For example, during 2017–2018, several elementary schools were focusing on meeting diverse needs while the middle school was focusing on student engagement.
    - iv. The superintendent and the principals told the team that they conducted monthly learning walks to monitor and track the implementation of the five high-leverage instructional practices.
  3. The district’s instructional leadership team (ILT) updates the Instructional Strategy annually.
- B.** Interviews with district leaders, school leaders, and teachers indicated that the Instructional Strategy was viewed throughout the district as the guiding document for teaching and learning and that it included the district’s vision and core values.
- C.** The Instructional Strategy’s teaching and learning objectives and initiatives guide the district’s PD offerings.
1. An interview with the superintendent and a document review indicated that all PD for evaluators, principals, and teachers was linked to the Instructional Strategy’s objectives of quality teaching, rigorous curriculum, and individualized student learning.
  2. Along with district-based PD and outside opportunities, the district provides school-based and job embedded PD, which also are connected to the Instructional Strategy.

**Impact:** By developing a coherent strategic plan linking the district’s strategic teaching and learning goals with its vision, mission, and core values and by closely aligning its PD plan with the strategic plan’s objectives, the district has fostered shared responsibility among educators and educational leaders for student learning.

**3. In observed classrooms, routines and supports were in place to ensure appropriate student behavior and classroom climate was conducive to teaching and learning.**

- A.** The review team found sufficient and compelling evidence of classroom routines and positive supports in place to ensure that students behave appropriately (characteristic #11) in 95 percent of observed elementary classrooms, in 87 percent of observed middle-school classrooms, and in 84 percent of observed high-school classrooms.
  - 1. At all levels, the review team noted that in almost all observed classes the routines were consistent and effective.
    - a. There were few disruptions in lessons; when disruptions took place, teachers positively redirected students. At the elementary level, transitions took place seamlessly. Middle- and high-school students arrived to class on time and in an orderly manner.
- B.** Observers found sufficient and compelling evidence that classroom climate was conducive to teaching and learning in 95 percent of elementary classrooms, in 92 percent of middle-school classrooms, and in 84 percent of high-school classrooms.
  - 1. Overall, the review team found that students and teachers across the district have respectful relationships.
    - a. In observed classrooms, students and teachers used respectful language and conducted classroom discourse in polite and positive tones. The review team characterized classroom environments as caring, supportive, joyful, and friendly with students having a seriousness of purpose.

**Impact:** Supportive routines and respectful relationships promote high levels of student engagement and responsibility.

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

### 4. In observed classrooms districtwide the review team found that practices related to setting learning expectations and checking for understanding were not implemented consistently.

**A. Focus Area #1: Learning Objectives and Expectations** In most observed classrooms, teachers explained lesson content with fluency and effectively placed the lesson in a larger context.

1. The review team found that teachers demonstrated sufficient and compelling evidence of knowledge of the subject matter (characteristic #1) in 100 percent of observed elementary classes, in 65 percent of middle-school classes, and in 92 percent of high-school classes.
  - a. For example, in a grade 4 mathematics class, the teacher explained and modeled different techniques on simplifying equivalent fractions using think-out-loud strategies to identify common mistakes.
  - b. In a grade 8 science class, before students watched a video about climate change in Antarctica, the teacher set the content of the video in a larger context to ensure student understanding.
  - c. In a grade 11 history class, the teacher provided the context for what students were studying and why.
2. In 76 percent of observed elementary classes, in only 48 percent of middle-school classes, and in 73 percent of high-school classes, observers noted sufficient and compelling evidence that the teacher ensured that students understood what they were learning and why (characteristic #2). Districtwide the review team did not observe the consistent use of posted daily objectives, “I can” statements, or standards. In observed classrooms at the middle and high schools, review team members did not find the consistent use of essential questions and agendas.
  - a. In elementary and high-school classes where teachers ensured that students understood what they were learning and why, students were able to restate the learning objective to review team members and to tell why it was important. For example, students in a grade 2 math class told review team members that they were measuring classroom objects using centimeters and meters to learn about measurement using the metric system. In a grade 10 ELA class, students stated that the objective of the lesson was to create an outline and explain why they were doing it.
  - b. In a majority of observed middle-school classes, learning objectives were not displayed or articulated by the teacher during the observation.
3. The review team observed sufficient and compelling evidence that appropriate classroom activities were well matched to learning objectives (characteristic #3) in 95 percent of

observed elementary classes, in 61 percent of middle-school classes, and in 61 percent of high-school classes.

- a. At the elementary level, ELA lessons reflected the various components of the Workshop Model. These included mini-lessons, independent work, conferencing, and sharing, which all supported lesson objectives.
  - b. In a grade 10 co-taught mathematics class, the lesson on interior angles included large-group and small-group work, culminating in students working on an online math game on angles.
    - i. In contrast, in some classrooms the students were not involved in activities beyond taking notes and answering questions.
4. In 91 percent of observed elementary classes, in 61 percent of middle-school classes, and in 61 percent of high-school classes, the review team found sufficient and compelling evidence that teachers conducted frequent checks for student understanding, provided feedback to students, and adjusted instruction (characteristic #4).
- a. At the elementary level, teachers conducted frequent checks for understanding by circulating around the room, checking in with small groups or individual students, providing feedback or re-teaching in conferences, targeting questions, and using strategies such as thumbs up/thumbs down and think-pair-share.
  - b. At the middle- and high-school levels, the review team observed teachers checking for understanding with questions, circulating around the room checking on groups or individual students and providing feedback and/or re-teaching. For example, in a grade 12 mathematics class students used individual whiteboards to display their work enabling the teacher to immediately check their understanding.
    - i. However, some teachers at the middle and high-school levels missed opportunities to check for understanding when they used closed-ended questions and did not probe to ensure student understanding, or when they were accepted unison short answers rather than checking with individual students.

**Impact:** When teachers do not set clear learning objectives and expectations, match appropriate activities to learning objectives, and routinely check for understanding, provide feedback, and adjust instruction, students do not understand what they are learning and why and teachers miss opportunities to improve their practice.

**5. In observed classrooms, the review team noted a higher incidence of students assuming responsibility for their learning and being engaged in the lesson at the elementary and high-school levels than at the middle-school level.**

**A. Focus Area #2: Student Engagement & Higher-Order Thinking** In observed classrooms districtwide, students were not consistently engaged in higher-order thinking and communicating their ideas and thinking with other.

1. The review team found sufficient and compelling evidence of students taking responsibility for their learning (characteristic #5) in 90 percent of observed elementary classes, in 52 percent of middle-school classes, and in 62 percent of high-school classes.
  - a. In almost all observed elementary classes, students took responsibility for their own learning with the teacher acting as the facilitator. The review team noted multiple examples of students as active, engaged learners, working independently, in pairs, in small groups, and in large groups. Students worked on projects, created poems and essays, edited their writing, and supported each other's learning.
  - b. In many observed middle-school and high-school classes, the team noted students taking responsibility for their learning by working independently, in pairs, or in small groups with teachers acting as facilitators. For example, in a grade 5 ELA class, students discussed the elements of a story using academic vocabulary while the teacher moved from group to group. In a grade 10 mathematics class, students worked in pairs and used appropriate math vocabulary while they simplifying radical expressions. In a grade 12 ELA class, working in pairs students prepared and led an in-depth discussion of the literary elements in two chapters of a text that the class was reading.
  - c. In contrast, in some observed middle- and high-school classes, the team observed teacher-centered instruction using lectures, notes, and worksheets, with limited opportunities for students to be actively engaged in learning. Further, the team observed limited strategies to maintain student engagement such as the use of cold calling on students.
2. The review team found sufficient and compelling evidence of students engaged in tasks that required analysis, problem-solving, evaluation or application of new knowledge (characteristic #6) in 71 percent of observed elementary classes, in only 35 percent of middle-school classes, and in 73 percent of high-school classes.
  - a. In most observed elementary math classes, the team noted examples of teachers emphasizing conceptual thinking. Students were frequently asked "why?" questions and were required to explaining their thinking or develop problem-solving strategies. In ELA classes, students analyzed, compared, and contrasted character traits.

- b. In a majority of observed high-school classes, students were frequently involved in analysis, synthesis, and active problem solving. For example, in a grade 10 mathematics class, students analyzed the relationship of angles and sides of a right triangle. In a grade 12 ELA class, students shared and evaluated inferences made in a discussion and analysis of literary characters in the text.
    - c. In contrast, in most observed middle-school classes, teacher-directed and whole-class activities prevailed, limiting students' opportunities to engage in tasks that could develop their higher-order thinking skills, such as applying what they had learned to a new situation. The team noted that questions in these classes often focused on low-level thinking skills. For example, students filled in worksheets/packets or copied notes from the overhead screen into their Chromebooks.
  3. Observers saw sufficient and compelling evidence of students communicating their ideas and thinking about content with each other (characteristic #7) in 62 percent of elementary classes, in only 39 percent of middle-school classes, and in 53 percent of high-school classes.
    - a. At the elementary level, the review team found that in the majority of lessons students had opportunities to discuss their ideas about content in pairs and in small groups. The review team noted the frequent use of turn and talk as a strategy for student-to-student communication about content.
    - b. In some observed middle-school classes, students exchanged ideas through peer editing, collaborating on assignments, participating in small- group discussions, or during turn and talk opportunities. However, in most observed middle-school classrooms, teacher-directed lessons limited students' opportunities to share ideas.
    - c. In a majority of observed high-school classes, the review team noted examples of student-to student exchanges. Students collaborated in small groups/pairs and exchanged their thinking through a quick turn and talk.
  4. Observers found sufficient and compelling evidence that students engaged with meaningful, real-world tasks (characteristic #8) in 58 percent of elementary classrooms, in only 39 percent of middle-school classes, and in only 46 percent of high-school classes.
    - a. In observed classes districtwide, the review team noted examples of students engaged with real-world tasks. For example, grade 8 science students made connections between the impact of global warming in Antarctica on penguins/whales and the effects of global warming in New England. In a grade 12 ELA class, students led an in-depth discussion grappling with an essential life question.
    - b. In most observed classes districtwide, however, the review team found limited evidence of students engaging with meaningful, real-world tasks. The team noted that math lessons often missed opportunities to make appropriate grade-level connections to real-

world issues. Some science classes relied solely on lectures and note taking instead of providing engaging or challenging hands-on experiences for students.

**Impact:** High-quality instruction provides all students with opportunities to be active, collaborative learners who regularly engage in high-level thinking skills that have connection to the real world. When these practices are not consistently present districtwide, students may not develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college, career, and beyond.

**6. In observed classrooms districtwide, inclusive practices were not firmly established.**

**A. Focus Area #3: Inclusive Practice & Classroom Culture** In observed classrooms districtwide, lessons were not consistently designed to support and challenge all students.

1. The review team found sufficient and compelling evidence that lessons were designed to support students with varied learning needs (characteristic # 9) in 91 percent of elementary classes, in only 44 percent of middle-school classes, and in 54 percent of high-school classes.
  - a. In observed elementary classrooms, the review team noted examples of lessons meeting the diverse needs of students, especially in the use of the Workshop Model for reading and writing which is used across all elementary schools. By design this model provides differentiated instruction based on frequent formative assessments. In math, teachers' use of common assessments provides student groupings for differentiated instruction. The team also noted that co-teachers were present and other support personnel helped to scaffold lessons and make them accessible for all learners.
  - b. In some observed middle-school classes, the diverse needs of students were largely met by the presence of co-teachers and additional personnel to support student learning rather than through differentiation in instruction. For example, in a grade 6 ELA class, the co-teacher moved from group to group to assist students who were working on assignments using Google Classroom while the classroom teacher worked with two students.
  - c. However, in most observed middle-school classes, lessons were minimally or not designed to support students with varied needs. In these classes, the tasks were not differentiated in process or product. All students worked on the same assignments.
  - d. In a majority of observed high-school classes, the team noted that co-teachers helped students access the curriculum.
2. The review team found sufficient and compelling evidence that teachers used a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of learners (characteristic #10) in 71 percent of observed elementary classes, in only 30 percent of middle-school classes, and in only 38 percent of high-school classes.

- a. In most observed elementary classrooms, teachers used a variety of instructional strategies. Typically, in one lesson, students could be in a large group, in a small group, or in pairs or working independently. Teachers used multiple, flexible formats which appealed to students' multiple learning modalities. In addition, students used Chromebooks to listen to stories and to read them.
- b. At the middle and the high schools, the review team observed some examples of well-structured lessons that included multiple formats supporting inclusive practices. For example, students used Google Classroom to conduct peer editing, to collaborate on assignments, or to share notes from student-led discussions.
- c. In contrast, in most observed middle- and high-school classes, teachers relied on teacher-directed instruction followed by teachers' questions and students' answers. In these classes, students had access to Chromebooks or their own devices, but often used them to take notes from the teacher's notes on the board.

**Impact:** When inclusive practices are not consistently implemented at all levels, the district cannot ensure that all students---regardless of learning needs---engage in challenging tasks and are learning to the best of their ability.

## Recommendation

### 1. The district should continue to work to ensure that effective teaching and learning practices are consistently implemented districtwide.

- A. District leaders, directors, principals, assistant principals, curriculum coordinators in grades 5–12 and coaches should continue to articulate and monitor the district's expectations of high-quality teaching and learning practices. Particular attention should be paid to effective practices relating to well-structured lessons, student ownership of learning, higher-order thinking, and opportunities for students to communicate their thinking and inclusive practices.
  1. The district should continue its efforts to fully develop high-quality instructional practices during coaching, in grade-level meetings, in professional learning communities, during school-based embedded professional development, and in district professional development opportunities.
  2. At the middle school and high school, instructional leadership teams should redouble their efforts to ensure that teachers have a clear understanding of how to ensure student engagement in lessons and routine student-to-student exchange of thinking.
  3. A shared understanding of what is meant by inclusive practices should be fully developed at the middle school and high school.

4. At all levels, teaching strategies to enhance higher-order thinking skills in students should be addressed.
- B. The district should continue its practice of conducting learning walks by district leaders, principals, coaches and coordinators, and should build on its practice of including teachers for the purpose of understanding and maintaining high-quality instruction districtwide.
  - C. The district should continue to identify and learn from existing exemplars of best practices at all levels.
    1. The district should continue to encourage peer observations of classrooms belonging to identified teacher-leaders for the purpose of reinforcing high-quality teaching practices.

**Benefits** from implementing this recommendation will include a deeper understanding and more consistent implementation of high-quality instruction characterized by well-structured lessons, rigor, and student ownership of learning in inclusive classroom environments, which can lead to improved learning outcomes for all students.

**Recommended resources:**

- ESE's *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/implementation-guide.docx>) is a resource to support instructional leaders in establishing a *Learning Walkthrough* process in a school or district. It is designed to provide guidance to those working in an established culture of collaboration as well as those who are just beginning to observe classrooms and discuss teaching and learning in a focused and actionable manner.
  - Appendix 4, *Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/continuum-practice.pdf>) is a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning.
- ESE's *Calibration Video Library* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/calibration/>) is a collection of professionally created videos of classroom instruction produced by the School Improvement Network. These videos depict a range of practice (this is NOT a collection of exemplars) to support within-district calibration activities that promote a shared understanding of instructional quality and rigor.
- ESE's *Online Calibration Training Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/calibration/tool/>) uses videos of classroom instruction from ESE's Calibration Video Library to simulate brief, unannounced observations. Groups of educators, such as a district leadership team, watch a video together and then individually assess the educator's practice related to specific elements from the Model Classroom Teacher Rubric and provide the educator with written feedback. Through real-time data displays, the group members can then see how their conclusions compare to each other, as well educators throughout the state.

- ESE's "*What to Look For*" *Observation Guides (Updated August 2017)* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/observation/>) describe what observers should expect to see in a classroom at a particular grade level in a specific subject area. This includes the knowledge and skills students should be learning and using (as reflected in state learning standards) and best practices related to classroom curriculum, instruction, and assessment for each subject area. The guides are not designed to replace any evaluation system or tools districts currently use, but are a resource to help classroom observers efficiently identify what teachers and students should be experiencing in specific subjects and grade levels.
- The Educator Effectiveness Guidebook for Inclusive Practice (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/guidebook/>) includes tools for districts, schools, and educators that are aligned to the MA Educator Evaluation Framework and promote evidence-based best practices for inclusion following the principles of Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning.

## Assessment

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### Contextual Background

District assessment practices are well structured and implemented at the elementary level, with middle-school and high-school data collection and dissemination practices and protocols in place but not consistently implemented. Elementary-school teachers work together in professional learning communities (PLCs) at least once every six-day cycle to look at student work, and to share rubrics and formative and benchmarking test results. They consult with each other about flexible groupings for reading and math and using data to inform instruction. While educators throughout the district routinely use data to assess students' progress and implement interventions, they do not routinely use data to inform curriculum and instruction.

At every level, the district uses commercial curricula including publishers' systems of assessments. At the high school, teachers also design and use common assessments within departments.

All district schools have data teams that use school-based tools to collect and analyze student performance data<sup>2</sup> and to make decisions about school-level programs and interventions. The district does not have a data collection and dissemination tool that allows K–12 staff easy access to students' assessment results, or a district-level team to analyze to track students' progress and evaluate programs. At the district level, data is not routinely formally aggregated or analyzed across all grades or between schools, particularly elementary to middle and middle to high school.

### Strength Finding

- 1. The district has two embedded structures, school PLCs and school data teams, for analyzing student achievement data, benchmark data, and other pertinent data to improve student achievement.**
  - A.** Districtwide Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) implement the district's assessment policies and practices. PLCs are well organized and data focused. Principals monitor and assess PLCs using rubrics that rate their effectiveness.
    1. Principals or coaches facilitate elementary-school PLCs, where teachers are encouraged to look at and discuss student outcomes. Principals told the review team that elementary PLCs were tied to teachers' weekly grade-level instructional goals for their students' improvement in reading, writing, and math.

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<sup>2</sup> Assessments include: the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), AIMSweb diagnostic assessments, and math interim assessments K–4; writing K–12; writing in response to reading in grades 3–12; math interim assessments K–12; math I Ready assessments in grades 5–8; and science interim assessments in grades 5–12 .

2. Teachers run middle- and high-school PLCs. An administrator said that while middle-school teachers were accustomed to the PLC concept because of their established team meeting model, high-school groups are getting accustomed to discussing curriculum and student data. Another administrator stated that because high-school teachers gave common assessments they were well versed at looking at benchmark data but they needed to learn to use other forms of data as well.
  3. PLCs provide the curriculum coordinators and content coaches with opportunities to monitor student performance by group and to check for curricular gaps.
- B.** In 2017–2018, the schools implemented data teams that monitor student achievement data throughout the year. They track individual students’ progress toward goals identified in the School Improvement Plans and adjust individual student’s intervention or enrichment plans, as needed.
1. Data teams meet three times each year to analyze benchmarking tests results. Each team consists of the principal, grade-level teachers, academic coaches, reading specialists and interventionists, teachers of students with moderate special needs, speech and language teachers, and the school psychologist.
  2. The data teams study benchmark assessment data for every student in their grade (Aimsweb, Benchmark Assessment System, iReady for math, and MCAS in appropriate grades). The data team identifies whether pupils need intervention (or enrichment) in literacy or math.
    - a. Students may be placed in an eight-week program, meeting four times each cycle. K–4, this program is called WIN (What I Need); in grades 5–8, the program is called the ICE Block (I Can Excel Block). In high school, benchmarking is used to determine whether students are scheduled for the Academic Support Center.

**Impact:** By developing practices and structures to assess individual students’ progress and provide interventions, the district has provided staff with the means to use data for decision-making about appropriate interventions to improve student learning. Because the district has structures and well-established protocols for its PLCs and data teams, the district is poised to use data to inform instructional practice and evaluate programs.

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

2. **The district is in the early stages of developing a systemwide approach to analyzing data to inform instruction and to assess program effectiveness. The district does not have a K–12 tool to organize data and generate reports.**
  - A. The district does not have district-level structures or practices to analyze data across schools or from middle- to high-school grades.
  - B. Principals told the team that each school’s data was kept in different formats but they would like to see student data shared across schools. At the time of the onsite review in March 2018, a district data dashboard was under construction.
    1. The district was constructing a data dashboard at the time of the review team’s visit. Its stated goal is to provide “data from three main threads related to the Wakefield Instructional Strategy.” The three areas are reading and writing, math discourse, and professional learning communities.
  - C. Interviews and a document review indicated that a K–12 tool to collect data and generate internal reports would help the district use real-time and historical data to evaluate several areas, including curricular evaluations in Phase Five of the curriculum review process (assessment and evaluation of improvements), middle-school cohort performance data in relation to high-school performance data, real-time data in strengthening areas of instruction to better meet the needs of all students, and data to drive resource allocation.
  - D. In its self-assessment submitted in advance of the onsite review, the district acknowledged that it had an “enormous amount of data available” and was eager to identify “high leverage data points” to inform decision-making at every level. The district noted that in order to accomplish this, it had to ensure that the data was available to all stakeholders and that it was “meaningful, purposeful and user-friendly.”

**Impact:** Without protocols and a districtwide approach to analyzing data and evaluating programs, the district’s efforts to grow as a data-driven decision-making organization are hampered.

## Recommendation

1. **The district should establish a district data team. The planned district data dashboard should be completed and its purpose communicated to all stakeholders.**
  - A. The district should consider designating a representative districtwide team whose responsibility would be to examine patterns, trends, strengths and weaknesses across schools and vertically K-12.

1. The team could coordinate with school-level data teams to provide a district-level lens on student performance and outcomes.
  2. The team could identify ways to facilitate data sharing between schools and lead the district in establishing a consistent approach to analyzing data to inform instruction and assess program effectiveness.
  3. The district should consider using the district data team as a platform to identify effective data analysis practices in particular schools and disseminate them districtwide.
- B. The district should move forward with plans to develop a district data dashboard.
1. The district data team's responsibilities could include oversight of the use and ongoing improvement of the data dashboard tool.

**Benefit:** When a district has systems, practices, and infrastructure to support a consistent and thorough approach to data analysis and use, it can help all educators to effectively examine student performance and outcomes and to make changes to curriculum, instruction, and policies to better serve all students.

**Recommended resources:**

- ESE's Assessment Literacy Continuum (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment/continuum.pdf>) is designed to identify the full range of skills educators need to use assessments effectively in classrooms and to organize these skills into a manageable framework. The continuum is a tool to frame important conversations about how an assessment is used to improve student learning.
- ESE's *District Data Team Toolkit* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/toolkit/district-data-toolkit.pdf>) is a set of resources to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a District Data Team.

# Student Support

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## Contextual Background

The district provides Tier 2 academic support in the elementary and middle schools through blocks in the daily schedule where students can receive both support and enrichment. Learning centers at the high school provide academic support to students with disabilities and students in general education.

The district provides several programs to aid students in completing their secondary education including credit recovery, summer school, and an after-school High School Equivalency Testing Program (HiSET). The district also provides for students aged 18–22 a post-secondary and community-based program which provides experiential and educational opportunities in the areas of daily living, employment, community inclusion, recreation, leisure, and real-world academic skills.

The district has low rates of suspension, dropout, and discipline referrals when compared with state averages. According to ESE data, in 2016–2017, the district’s out-of-school suspension rate was 2.0 percent, compared with the state rate of 2.8 percent. The district’s 2017 dropout rate was 0.2 percent compared with the state rate of 1.8 percent.

Students and staff said that the high school was a safe place. The district has a comprehensive safety plan. School leaders and local public safety officials conduct regular drills and tabletop exercises.

## Strength Findings

**1. The district has moved to an inclusion model for students with special needs, whether academic, social-emotional or behavioral. This has increased the number of students participating in general education classes and reduced the number of students receiving pullout instruction or in substantially separate classes.**

**A.** The district’s planning documents describe a vision for inclusive practices in the district.

1. Under the heading “individualized student learning,” the district’s Instructional Strategy 2017–2020 lists as an initiative the development of inclusive practices to meet the diverse academic and social-emotional needs of students.

a. The district’s 2017–2018 action plan for inclusive practice has as its intended outcome that the district will realize a fully inclusive model as articulated in the district’s vision.

2. The district document “Striving for Excellence as a Model Inclusionary School System” outlines how students learn in an inclusionary setting. For example, the document states that students “are expected to meet the same standards, but are provided supports as needed and are allowed different paths and time to get there.”

**B.** The district has reduced the number of students in substantially separate classrooms.

1. The district developed a philosophy of inclusion that returned students to their neighborhood schools from substantially separate classrooms in other elementary schools.
  - a. Before 2013, the district had multiple substantially separate classes. Most were clustered in one elementary school. The superintendent stated that there were now few students in substantially separate classrooms. District leaders said that the district was near the end of the process of disbanding substantially separate classrooms.
  - b. Elementary students who were in the substantially separate academic support program (IASP) have been moved to a new (2017–2018) program, the social therapeutic academic community for kids (STACK). The students in this program are included in general education classrooms.
  - c. District leaders stated that because students who had been in substantially separate classrooms were now included in general education classrooms, behavioral issues have been reduced and the students were now accessing the full curriculum for the first time.
  - d. Between 2013 and 2015, the district hired a fourth ELL teacher and moved English language learners, who previously had been clustered in one elementary school, into their neighborhood schools.
- C. The district has hired staff and created new positions to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms.
  1. The district has adopted a co-teaching model in inclusion classrooms.
    - a. The superintendent stated that there was co-teaching at every level.
    - b. District leaders stated that co-teaching classrooms were in place at two elementary schools, the middle school, and the high school.
  2. The district has created the position of special education coordinator. There are three special education coordinators, one at each level.
    - a. District leaders stated that the coordinators' responsibilities included supporting inclusion, working as inclusion coaches, and facilitating professional development and co-teaching models.

**Impact:** By creating inclusionary practices and by investing in programs and staffing, the district likely ensures that all students with disabilities have access to the full curriculum and are educated with their peers. This likely contributes to a more positive school experience, improved social-emotional outcomes, and higher student achievement.

**2. The district has focused on the social-emotional health of its students through its planning process and through the development of programs and staffing priorities.**

**A.** The district has made the social-emotional health of its students a priority.

1. In the district's Instructional Strategy 2017–2020, one of the nine initiatives for the 2017–2018 school year is to implement a new social-emotional health and learning strategy.
2. When the review team asked the superintendent what drove the focus on social-emotional health, the superintendent said that she had been concerned about these issues for a long time, since her role as a high-school principal in the district. The superintendent also stated that by including the social-emotional initiatives in the Instructional Strategy 2017–2020, the district could focus its external partners and ensure that there were no gaps or overlaps.
3. The district document entitled "WPS Strategy for Social Emotional Health and Learning" has seven initiatives for the 2017–2018 school year under three headings: promote emotional and mental health; cultivating safe, welcoming and healthy schools; and develop responsible and resilient children.
4. The review team noted substantial evidence of a positive and supportive learning environment in observed classrooms. The district rubric, "A Guide to Student Growth Measures," lists "students demonstrate social and emotional skills" as a measure of student growth. The rubric includes self-awareness and self-management skills, social awareness and relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

**B.** Interviews and a document review indicated that the district has invested in programs, additional staff, and professional development to address the social-emotional health of its students.

1. At the elementary level, the STACK program (social therapeutic academic community for kids) includes students with behavioral issues in elementary classrooms. Staff includes a special education teacher and a behavioral coach.
2. The middle school has a therapeutic learning center staffed by the school adjustment counselor, a special education teacher, and two paraprofessionals. In addition, the middle school has two counselors who provide social-emotional support and run small groups and check-ins. In 2017–2018, the middle school implemented the "referrals for interventions to support excellence" (RISE) program. Teachers can use this program to refer general education students for academic or social emotional interventions. The RISE program enables the school to track and monitor the effectiveness of interventions. The high-school's homeroom structure enables students to keep the same homeroom for four years. District leaders stated that they hoped that for some of the students, the homeroom teacher would become their trusted adult.

3. The high school has an alternative program for students with emotional or behavioral challenges who need intensive support in the classroom and throughout the school day.
  - a. The alternative program uses a team of academic teachers along with an assistant principal, two paraprofessionals, and the school psychologists to help serve the students in this program.
4. In 2017–2018, the district created a bridge program to support students who are returning to school from hospitalizations or who may have anxiety or school phobia.
5. School psychologists run the Steps2Success (S2S) program, which consists of an S2S homeroom and an end-of-the-day check-in. In addition, each student in the S2S program has a faculty mentor.
6. In the 2017–2018 school year, the district is using the Michigan Model health curriculum in kindergarten through grade 2 and in grade 6. This program has a strong social-emotional wellness component.
7. The district’s strategy for social-emotional health in 2017–2018 includes several new professional development initiatives.

**Impact:** When a district prioritizes the social-emotional health of its students and invests resources to support this, the chances of social-emotional learning becoming part of the district’s common practice and language are increased. The focus on students’ social-emotional health is likely to contribute to improved well-being and greater student achievement and outcomes.

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

3. **The district has not put in place a districtwide, coordinated system of programs and supports to ensure that all students’ academic and non-academic needs are met.**
  - A. Interviews with the superintendent and other district staff and a document review indicated that the district was challenged to provide continuity in programs and supports from school to school.
    1. For example, the coordination of social-emotional learning supports is not fully developed. Responsibility to meet the needs of students with social-emotional learning issues rests within each school.
    2. Interviewees told the review team that the district was “on its way and moving in the right direction” to address students’ unique needs. They acknowledged that similar programs, sometimes with different names, did not work closely together across school levels. For example, the Therapeutic Learning Center at the middle school shares some similar goals

and approaches with the alternative program at the high school, yet these programs operate independently.

3. District and school staff stated that the transition of students from elementary to middle school was improving because of recent increased attention to this critical transition point. However, the move from middle school to high school, particularly for students who have experienced challenges, needs improvement. For example:
  - a. The district does not have formal procedures in place to ensure that students who are receiving academic, social, and/or emotional support in middle school are known to high-school staff upon entering grade 9.
  - b. The district's most universal academic support strategy is provided to elementary and middle-school students through the What I Need (WIN) and I Can Succeed (ICE) blocks, respectively. However, nothing similar is provided to high-school students on a formal basis.

**Impact:** The absence of a well-coordinated and comprehensive K–12 system of supports means that some students may not have the support they need to succeed. Furthermore, the absence of continuity across schools likely prevents some students from making effective transitions from one school or program to the next.

**4. The district's approach to postsecondary preparation is largely focused on college planning and does not provide sufficient programs and opportunities to ensure all students are prepared for higher education and career opportunities upon graduation.**

- A. Interviews with students and students' families and a review of documents and the district's website indicated that the high school did not provide a comprehensive system for college or career preparation, or programs to encourage and/or help students to learn about postsecondary options other than meeting with guidance counselors beginning in grade 11.
- B. The district has some student-specific, work-based learning opportunities; however, these are limited to electives to students in the high-school alternative program, and to students enrolled in the community-based Purposeful Opportunities for Successful Transitions (POST) Academy.

**Impact:** By limiting the programs and opportunities to help students explore, experience, and make plans for their lives after high school, the district cannot ensure that students are prepared for postsecondary education and career opportunities upon graduation.

## Recommendations

1. **The district should take steps to ensure that programs and supports are well coordinated, that students experience smooth transitions between schools, and that all students are well-prepared for success after high school.**
  - A. The district should work to strengthen coordination and continuity among the many programs and supports that are currently in place.
    1. The district might consider mapping the student support programs and services that are currently provided throughout the district and identifying any gaps in both continuity and communication systems that may exist.
  - B. The district should use qualitative and quantitative data, including feedback from students and their families, to identify ways to better support students as they transition from middle school to high school.
  - C. Beginning in middle school, the district should implement more systemic and robust strategies for preparing all students for a range of opportunities after high school.

**Benefits:** By improving coordination across the K–12 system, the district will help to ensure that all students are provided with ongoing opportunities to receive the support they need. Helping all students make effective transitions between schools will contribute to students’ success in their new schools. A more thorough approach to postsecondary preparation will help to ensure that all students are poised to succeed after high school.

### Recommended resources:

- ESE’s *Early Warning Indicator System* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/ewis.html>) is a tool to provide information to districts about the likelihood that their students will reach key academic goals. Districts can use the tool in conjunction with other data and sources of information to better target student supports and interventions and to examine school-level patterns over time in order to address systemic issues that may impede students’ ability to meet academic goals.
- The *Early Warning Implementation Guide* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/implementation-guide.pdf>) provides information on how to use early warning data, including the Massachusetts Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS), to identify, diagnose, support and monitor students in grades 1-12. It offers educators an overview of EWIS and how to effectively use these data in conjunction with local data by following a six-step implementation cycle.
- My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP), formerly called the Individual Learning Plan, is a student-directed, multi-year, dynamic tool that maps academic plans, personal/social growth, and career development activities while taking into account the student’s unique, self-defined interests, needs, and goals for the attainment of postsecondary success. The *Massachusetts Guide for Implementing*

*Individual Learning Plans* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/initiatives/>) describes the tool and provides guidance related to the process.

- ESE offers a range of tools, articles, and resources related to college and career readiness (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/resources.html?section=tools>).
- The *Massachusetts Systems for Student Success* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfss/>) is a blueprint for school improvement that focuses on systems, structures and supports across the district, school, and classroom to meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students. The SfSS website includes links to a self-assessment and a variety of helpful resources.

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

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### Review Team Members

The review was conducted from March 5–7, 2018, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Charles Milton Burnett, Curriculum
2. Suzanne Kelly, Instruction
3. Alison Fraser, Assessment
4. Lonnie Kaufman, Student Support
5. John Retchless, Student Support
6. Christine Brandt, *review team coordinator*

### District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: one school committee member.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers' association: the first and second vice-presidents, the treasurer, the secretary, and one member.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: the assistant superintendent, the special education director and coordinators, and the director of METCO (Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity).

The team visited the following schools: Dolbeare (K-4), Woodville (K-4), Greenwood (K-4), Walton (K-4), Galvin Middle School (grades 5–8) and Wakefield Memorial High School (grades 9–12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with six principals and focus groups with five elementary-school teachers and one middle-school teacher; no high-school teachers attended their focus group. There was early dismissal of classes on the final day of the review.

The team observed 70 classes in the district: 26 at the high school, 23 at the middle school, and 21 at the four elementary schools.

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

- Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates.
- Data on the district’s staffing and finances.
- District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district’s end-of-year financial reports.

**Site Visit Schedule**

<b>Monday</b> 3/5/2018	<b>Tuesday</b> 3/6/2018	<b>Wednesday</b> 3/7/2018
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff; document reviews; interview with teachers’ association; and visits to Wakefield Memorial High School, Galvin Middle School, and Greenwood and Woodville elementary schools for classroom observations.	Interviews with district staff and principals; teacher focus groups; parent focus group; school committee members, and visits to Wakefield Memorial High School, Galvin Middle School, and Dolbeare, Walton, and Woodville elementary schools for classroom observations.	Visits to Memorial High School, Galvin Middle School, and Greenwood, Walton, Dolbeare, and Woodville elementary schools for classroom observations. Follow-up interviews; district wrap-up meeting with the superintendent.

## Appendix B: Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures

**Table B1a: Wakefield Public Schools  
2017–2018 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	89	2.5%	86,305	9.0%
Asian	120	3.4%	65,667	6.9%
Hispanic	204	5.8%	191,201	20.0%
Native American	6	0.2%	2,103	0.2%
White	2,975	84.9%	573,335	60.1%
Native Hawaiian	7	0.2%	818	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	104	3.0%	34,605	3.6%
All	3,505	100.0%	954,034	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2017

**Table B1b: Wakefield Public Schools  
2017–2018 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations**

Group	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	579	61.0%	16.3%	171,061	38.0%	17.7%
Econ. Dis.	449	47.3%	12.8%	305,203	67.9%	32.0%
ELLs and Former ELLs	62	6.5%	1.8%	97,334	21.6%	10.2%
All high needs students	949	100.0%	26.8%	449,584	100.0%	46.6%

Notes: As of October 1, 2017. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 3,543; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 964,806.

**Table B2: Wakefield Public Schools  
Attendance Rates, 2014–2017**

<b>Group</b>	<b>N (2017)</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>4-yr Change</b>	<b>State (2017)</b>
High Needs	966	94.1	94.0	93.6	93.5	-0.6	93.1
Econ. Dis.	457	--	92.8	92.5	92.8	--	92.6
ELLs	67	96.0	94.7	94.9	94.8	-1.2	93.5
SWD	606	94.1	94.0	93.8	93.4	-0.7	93.0
African American	89	95.1	95.1	94.9	93.5	-1.6	94.0
Asian	118	97.2	96.1	96.2	95.8	-1.4	96.3
Hispanic or Latino	204	95.7	94.6	94.6	94.5	-1.2	92.8
Multi-Race	100	96.1	95.6	96.1	95.7	-0.4	94.5
White	3,086	95.9	95.5	95.4	95.3	-0.6	95.1
All	3,608	95.8	95.5	95.4	95.3	-0.5	94.6

Notes: The attendance rate is calculated by dividing the total number of days students attended school by the total number of days students were enrolled in a particular school year. A student's attendance rate is counted toward any district the student attended. In addition, district attendance rates included students who were out placed in public collaborative or private alternative schools/programs at public expense. Attendance rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

**Table B3: Wakefield Public Schools  
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2015–2017**

	FY15		FY16		FY17	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
<b>Expenditures</b>						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	\$31,228,727	\$31,480,551	\$34,847,085	\$34,844,883	\$36,357,670	\$36,348,317
By municipality	\$15,927,397	\$26,801,494	\$16,366,969	\$18,730,147	\$17,280,556	\$16,841,052
Total from local appropriations	\$47,156,124	\$58,282,045	\$51,214,054	\$53,575,030	\$53,638,226	\$53,189,369
From revolving funds and grants	--	\$6,000,006	--	\$5,733,603	--	\$6,526,731
Total expenditures	--	\$64,282,051	--	\$59,308,633	--	\$59,716,100
<b>Chapter 70 aid to education program</b>						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	\$5,317,017	--	\$5,401,367	--	\$5,844,577
Required local contribution	--	\$27,532,408	--	\$27,898,292	--	\$28,386,107
Required net school spending**	--	\$32,849,425	--	\$33,299,659	--	\$34,230,684
Actual net school spending	--	\$40,890,534	--	\$44,402,206	--	\$46,549,264
Over/under required (\$)	--	\$8,041,108	--	\$11,102,547	--	\$12,318,580
Over/under required (%)	--	24.5%	--	33.3%	--	36%

\*Chapter 70 state aid funds are deposited in the local general fund and spent as local appropriations.

\*\*Required net school spending is the total of Chapter 70 aid and required local contribution. Net school spending includes only expenditures from local appropriations, not revolving funds and grants. It includes expenditures for most administration, instruction, operations, and out-of-district tuitions. It does not include transportation, school lunches, debt, or capital.

Sources: FY15, FY16, and FY17 District End-of-Year Reports, Chapter 70 Program information on ESE website

Data retrieved 12/13/17 and 10/4/18

**Table B4: Wakefield Public Schools  
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil  
Fiscal Years 2014–2016**

<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Administration	\$518	\$429	\$436
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$746	\$969	\$934
Teachers	\$5,109	\$5,002	\$5,185
Other teaching services	\$857	\$993	\$1,255
Professional development	\$136	\$273	\$196
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$249	\$261	\$391
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$283	\$311	\$355
Pupil services	\$756	\$873	\$882
Operations and maintenance	\$1,241	\$1,288	\$1,214
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$2,465	\$2,453	\$2,560
<b>Total expenditures per in-district pupil</b>	<b>\$12,361</b>	<b>\$12,853</b>	<b>\$13,407</b>

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

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

## Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Focus Area #1: Learning Objectives & Expectations		Insufficient Evidence	Limited Evidence	Sufficient Evidence	Compelling Evidence	Average Number of points
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1 to 4)
1. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter.	ES	0%	0%	95%	5%	3.0
	MS	13%	22%	48%	17%	2.7
	HS	0%	8%	65%	27%	3.2
	<b>Total #</b>	3	7	48	12	3.0
	<b>Total %</b>	4%	10%	69%	17%	
2. The teacher ensures that students understand what they should be learning in the lesson and why.	ES	0%	24%	76%	0%	2.8
	MS	17%	35%	35%	13%	2.4
	HS	4%	23%	69%	4%	2.7
	<b>Total #</b>	5	19	42	4	2.6
	<b>Total %</b>	7%	27%	60%	6%	
3. The teacher uses appropriate classroom activities well matched to the learning objective(s).	ES	0%	5%	90%	5%	3.0
	MS	4%	35%	52%	9%	2.7
	HS	0%	38%	46%	15%	2.8
	<b>Total #</b>	1	19	43	7	2.8
	<b>Total %</b>	1%	27%	61%	10%	
4. The teacher conducts frequent checks for student understanding, provides feedback, and adjusts instruction.	ES	0%	10%	86%	5%	3.0
	MS	0%	39%	57%	4%	2.7
	HS	8%	31%	42%	19%	2.7
	<b>Total #</b>	2	19	42	7	2.8
	<b>Total %</b>	3%	27%	60%	10%	
<b>Total Score For Focus Area #1</b>	ES					11.8
	MS					10.4
	HS					11.4
	<b>Total</b>					11.2

<b>Focus Area #2: Student Engagement &amp; Higher-Order Thinking</b>		Insufficient Evidence	Limited Evidence	Sufficient Evidence	Compelling Evidence	Average Number of points
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1 to 4)
5. Students assume responsibility to learn and are engaged in the lesson.	<b>ES</b>	0%	10%	76%	14%	3.0
	<b>MS</b>	9%	39%	43%	9%	2.5
	<b>HS</b>	4%	35%	50%	12%	2.7
	<b>Total #</b>	3	20	39	8	2.7
	<b>Total %</b>	4%	29%	56%	11%	
6. Students engage in higher-order thinking.	<b>ES</b>	0%	29%	71%	0%	2.7
	<b>MS</b>	22%	43%	35%	0%	2.1
	<b>HS</b>	8%	19%	50%	23%	2.9
	<b>Total #</b>	7	21	36	6	2.6
	<b>Total %</b>	10%	30%	51%	9%	
7. Students communicate their ideas and thinking with each other.	<b>ES</b>	19%	19%	48%	14%	2.6
	<b>MS</b>	22%	39%	39%	0%	2.2
	<b>HS</b>	15%	31%	38%	15%	2.5
	<b>Total #</b>	13	21	29	7	2.4
	<b>Total %</b>	19%	30%	41%	10%	
8. Students engage with meaningful, real-world tasks.	<b>ES</b>	14%	29%	48%	10%	2.5
	<b>MS</b>	26%	35%	26%	13%	2.3
	<b>HS</b>	12%	42%	31%	15%	2.5
	<b>Total #</b>	12	25	24	9	2.4
	<b>Total %</b>	17%	36%	34%	13%	
<b>Total Score For Focus Area #2</b>	<b>ES</b>					10.9
	<b>MS</b>					9.1
	<b>HS</b>					10.6
	<b>Total</b>					10.2

<b>Focus Area #3: Inclusive Practice &amp; Classroom Culture</b>		Insufficient Evidence	Limited Evidence	Sufficient Evidence	Compelling Evidence	Average Number of points
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1 to 4)
9. The teacher ensures that students are engaging in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs.	<b>ES</b>	0%	10%	86%	5%	3.0
	<b>MS</b>	13%	43%	35%	9%	2.4
	<b>HS</b>	19%	27%	46%	8%	2.4
	<b>Total #</b>	8	19	38	5	2.6
	<b>Total %</b>	11%	27%	54%	7%	
10. The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies.	<b>ES</b>	0%	29%	71%	0%	2.7
	<b>MS</b>	13%	57%	26%	4%	2.2
	<b>HS</b>	12%	50%	38%	0%	2.3
	<b>Total #</b>	6	32	31	1	2.4
	<b>Total %</b>	9%	46%	44%	1%	
11. Classroom routines and positive supports are in place to ensure that students behave appropriately.	<b>ES</b>	0%	5%	71%	24%	3.2
	<b>MS</b>	4%	9%	74%	13%	3.0
	<b>HS</b>	4%	12%	46%	38%	3.2
	<b>Total #</b>	2	6	44	18	3.1
	<b>Total %</b>	3%	9%	63%	26%	
12. The classroom climate is conducive to teaching and learning.	<b>ES</b>	0%	5%	81%	14%	3.1
	<b>MS</b>	0%	9%	70%	22%	3.1
	<b>HS</b>	0%	15%	42%	42%	3.3
	<b>Total #</b>	0	7	44	19	3.2
	<b>Total %</b>	0%	10%	63%	27%	
<b>Total Score For Focus Area #3</b>	<b>ES</b>					12.0
	<b>MS</b>					10.7
	<b>HS</b>					11.2
	<b>Total</b>					11.2