



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

School District Examination Report:

Freetown, Lakeville and
Freetown-Lakeville
Public Schools



data driven

standards based

learner centered →

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

November 2004

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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The Educational Management Audit Council voted to accept this report at their meeting of November 19, 2004, with a letter of concern regarding student achievement and funding in the town of Lakeville, one of the three districts considered in this examination.

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability would like to acknowledge the professional cooperation extended to the audit team by the Department of Education; the Superintendent of the Freetown, Lakeville, and Freetown-Lakeville Public Schools, William Conners; the school department staff of the Freetown, Lakeville, and Freetown-Lakeville Public Schools; and the Town officials from both Freetown and Lakeville.

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Executive Summary

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) examined the Freetown, Lakeville, and Freetown-Lakeville Public Schools (Freetown-Lakeville) in mid-May of 2004. During 2000-2003, it was among the ‘Moderate’ performing school systems in the Commonwealth. The following provides a summary of the findings of the examination and the district’s performance on the 2003 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test.

Proficiency/Achievement:

- The Average Proficiency Index (API) for the Freetown, Lakeville, and Freetown-Lakeville Regional school districts was 77.6, which was based on the 2003 MCAS results. The state average for the API was 75.7 in 2003. This placed the composite of the three-districts among the ‘Moderate’ performing academic school districts in the Commonwealth. In English Language Arts (ELA), the composite of the districts’ ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) was 84.6, and the state average for EPI was 82.2. In math, the composite districts’ math Proficiency Index (MPI) was 70.5, and the state average for MPI was 69.3.
- Freetown’s Average Proficiency Index (API) was 76, which was based on the 2003 MCAS results. The state average for the API was 75.7 in 2003. This placed Freetown among the ‘Moderate’ performing academic school districts in the Commonwealth. In English Language Arts (ELA), the district’s ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) was 81.3, and the state average for EPI was 82.2. In math, the district’s math Proficiency Index (MPI) was 71.6, and the state average for MPI was 69.3.
- Lakeville’s Average Proficiency Index (API) was 71, which was based on the 2003 MCAS results. The state average for the API was 75.7 in 2003. This placed Lakeville among the ‘Moderate’ performing academic school districts in the Commonwealth. In English Language Arts (ELA), the district’s ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) was 75.7, and the state average for EPI was 82.2. In math, the district’s math Proficiency Index (MPI) was 66.3, and the state average for MPI was 69.3.
- Freetown-Lakeville’s Average Proficiency Index (API) was 79.8, which was based on the 2003 MCAS results. The state average for the API was 75.7 in 2003. This placed Freetown-Lakeville among the ‘Moderate’ performing academic school districts in the Commonwealth. In English Language Arts (ELA), the district’s ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) was 88.1, and the state average for EPI was 82.2. In math, the district’s math Proficiency Index (MPI) was 71.5, and the state average for MPI was 69.3.
- In Freetown, on the 2003 MCAS test, 54.9% of the students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories. This figure was 3.3 percentage points more than the state average percentages of students in those categories.

- In Freetown, on the 2003 MCAS test, in ELA, 43.7% of the students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories, 0.2 percentage points less than the state’s average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Freetown, on the 2003 MCAS test, in math, 66.0% of the students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories, 6.7 percentage points more than the state’s average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS test, 65.0% of the students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories. This figure was 13.4 percentage points more than the state average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS test, in ELA, 52.9% of the students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories. This figure 9.0 was percentage points more than the state’s average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS, in math, 77.2% of the students scored in those categories, 17.9 percentage points more than the state’s average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS test, 57.1% of the students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories. This figure was 5.3 percentage points more than the state average for those categories.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS test, in ELA, 70.9% of the students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories. The figure was 10.4 percentage points more than the state average for those categories.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS, in math, 44.1% of the students scored in those categories. This figure was 1.3 percentage points more than the state average for those categories.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, in 2003, the Proficiency Indices of 88.1 for ELA and 71.5 for math were 5.9 and 2.2 points lower than the statewide averages.
- On the MCAS retest administered in the winter of 2003, 97.3% of the Freetown-Lakeville Class of 2003 earned a Competency Determination (CD), as compared to 95% of the statewide Class of 2003.
- On the MCAS retest administered in the winter of 2003, 97.4% of the Freetown-Lakeville Class of 2004 earned a Competency Determination, as compared to 93% of the statewide Class of 2004. In the spring of 2004, the district’s CD for this class was 98%.

Equity of Achievement/Proficiency:

- In Freetown, n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.
- In Lakeville, n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, the n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

Improvement:

- Performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index for the Freetown, Lakeville, and Freetown-Lakeville Regional school districts increased for ELA on average by 1.4 points and, in math, on average by 3.0 points.
- In Freetown, 5.3% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 8.6% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index rose by 5.8 points and in math, by 1.6 points.
- In Freetown, in ELA, 11.1% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 8.6% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown, in math, 0.7% fewer students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 8.6% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Lakeville, 19.1% fewer students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 2.8% more students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Lakeville, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index fell by 9.7 points and in math, by 9.4 points.
- In Lakeville, in ELA, 15.4% fewer students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 2.8% more students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Lakeville, in math, 22.8% fewer students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000 and 2.9% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, 15.1% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 16.1% more students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index rose by 10.8 points. In math, they rose by 15.0 points.

- In Freetown-Lakeville, in ELA, 15.7% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 11.9% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, in math, 15.4% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 15.3% more students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.

Equity of Improvement:

- In Freetown, the n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.
- In Lakeville, n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, the n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

Participation and Access:

- In Freetown, overall, all eligible students, including special education students participated in ELA and math assessments at the required levels.
- In Lakeville, overall, all eligible students, including special education students, participated in ELA and math assessments at the required levels.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, all eligible students participated in ELA and math assessments at the required levels.

Summary of Preliminary Findings by Domain:

Assessment and Evaluation:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on seven, ‘Poor’ on eleven, ‘Unsatisfactory’ on three of the twenty-one performance indicators in this domain.
- During the period under review, the district used no standardized tests besides the MCAS test.
- During the period under review, no formal training was provided to all of the district’s teachers in the use of student assessment data.
- During the period under review, the classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005 exceeded the state Competency Determination (CD) rate in both ELA and math.
- Student participation rates in the 2003 ELA and math state assessments exceeded the state standard of 95%.

- Teacher absences in the district ranged from 9.5 days at the high school to 16.7 days at one elementary school. At the time of the on-site review, the district did not evaluate the effects of teacher absence on student achievement.
- Approximately 15% of the district’s teachers did not have renewals of state certification in their personnel files.
- Administrators indicated that they were overwhelmed by the staff evaluation schedule. One principal described the process as “numbing,” and others stated that it left little time for other tasks.
- Overall, the evaluation process conforms to the requirements of the law. However, the individual evaluations were generally *pro forma* and not valuable from the point of view of personal growth and professional development.
- The results of various staff and program evaluations were rarely analyzed in a collective sense, or used to drive or inform change in the district.

Curriculum and Instruction:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on twelve, ‘Poor’ on eight, ‘Unsatisfactory’ on four of the twenty-four performance indicators in this domain.
- The district’s curriculum was not fully aligned with state curriculum frameworks. There was no horizontal alignment beyond sporadic horizontal alignment at the elementary school level.
- The district employed a director of curriculum and instruction, who led stipend-supported teachers in the curriculum alignment effort, but time and resources constrained training, supervision, and mentoring.
- Principals monitored teachers’ curriculum delivery through classroom observations and the use of the curriculum guides to plan instruction. The standards of effective teaching in CMR 35.00, the *Research for Better Teaching* protocols, and curriculum frameworks informed principals’ evaluations of teachers. These frameworks were not aligned with the MCAS test results.
- The district did not have a well-defined instructional program.
- The district employed teachers who were highly qualified in their areas of responsibility.
- During the period under review, the district reduced exclusions at the middle school from 88 to 49, but exclusions at the high school increased.
- The district lacked formal, written policies and procedures for transition management and dropout prevention and intervention.

- Student handbooks clearly stated expectations for student behavior and consequences for infractions.
- The district’s professional development plan was a collection of in-house and external workshops and courses, rather than a support system for a data-driven district strategic plan to improve student learning.
- During the period under review, the district’s professional development was aligned with the district strategic plan and the SIPs, which were aligned with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) standards. The professional development plan lacked a connection with student assessment results.
- The district lacked a coherent, organized plan to connect the professional development dollars that were distributed in school, district, and grant budgets.
- The application and follow up processes for professional development lacked any measurable or observable means to determine effects on teaching and learning.

Student Academic Support Services:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on three, ‘Poor’ on three, ‘Unsatisfactory’ one of the seven performance indicators in this domain.
- During the period under review, the district did not have a district curriculum accommodation plan (DCAP).
- During the period under review, the district’s strategic plan focused on meeting or exceeding the NEASC accreditation standards, which were based on the mission and philosophical beliefs of the district’s schools. The plan did not refer to the MCAS test or incorporate data - based, standards-driven strategies.

Leadership and Governance:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on ten and ‘Poor’ on six of the sixteen performance indicators in this domain.
- The district’s strategic plan did not address the improvement of student achievement as measured by the MCAS test results.
- The school improvement plans (SIPs) were aligned with the strategic plan and did not focus on the improvement of student achievement as measured by the MCAS test results.
- The district had no local, district-wide, data-driven assessment tool to monitor student achievement.
- The Freetown-Lakeville district was served by four legal entities established by the Massachusetts General Laws.

- In the district, the superintendent of schools served four school committees.
- The school facilities provided a stimulating learning environment.

Business and Finance:

- The EQA examiners rated the district as ‘Excellent’ on two, ‘Satisfactory’ on fourteen, and ‘Poor’ on four of the twenty performance indicators in this domain.
- The complexity of the district required the development and monitoring of three distinct budgets overseen by four school committees.
- There was no connection between budget decisions and student achievement.
- The district’s commitment to long-term facility planning was comprehensive.
- The towns’ support of the district’s educational facilities was notable.

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

On May 11, through May 13, 2004, the EQA conducted an independent examination of the Freetown, Lakeville, and Freetown-Lakeville Public Schools for the period between 2000-2003. This examination applied the standards related to the EQA's five major domains of inquiry, which include: A, Assessment and Evaluation; B, Curriculum and Instruction; C, Student Academic Support Services; D, Leadership and Governance; and E, Business and Financial Management. The EQA's examination process for school districts involved two tiers of investigation and utilized twelve standards. The basis of this report is the result of the source documents, correspondence sent prior to the on-site visit, interviews with the representative from the school committee, the district leadership team, school administrators, and additional documents submitted while in the district. The report does not include documents, revised data, or comments that may have surfaced after the on-site visit.

Freetown and Lakeville are small towns located in Bristol and Plymouth counties in southeastern Massachusetts. In these towns, education, healthcare, and social services are the largest sources of employment followed by manufacturing. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, they have a combined population of 18,293 people and an average median family income of \$72,603, while the median family income in Massachusetts is \$61,664. These two communities both have a Town Meeting/Board of Selectmen form of government. There is a five-person school committee in both Freetown and in Lakeville, and a six-person committee in Freetown-Lakeville. Freetown has one school serving grades PreK-4, Lakeville has two schools serving grades PreK-4, and Freetown-Lakeville has two schools serving grades 5-12. The most recent Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) figures indicate that, on October 1, 2003, there were 521 students enrolled in Freetown, 763 enrolled in Lakeville, and 1,897 enrolled in Freetown-Lakeville.

The demographic/subgroup composition in Freetown is: 96.4% White, 1.2% Hispanic-American, 1.3% African-American, 1.2% Asian-American, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), 0.0%; Free or Reduced Lunch/Yes (FRL/Y), 6.3%; and Special Education (SPED), 0.0%. The demographic/subgroup composition in Lakeville is: 98.2% White, 0.3% Hispanic-American, 1%

African-American, 0.5% Asian-American, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), 0.0%; Free or Reduced Lunch/Yes (FRL/Y), 4.1%; and Special Education (SPED), 16.9%. The demographic/subgroup composition in Freetown-Lakeville is: 98.2% White, 0.4% Hispanic-American, 1.1% African-American, 0.2% Asian-American, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), 0.0%; Free or Reduced Lunch/Yes (FRL/Y), 8.4%; and Special Education (SPED), 13%.

During the ten years of education reform in Massachusetts, Freetown's state Chapter 70 Aid increased by 141% from \$463,093 in FY1993 to \$1,115,300 in FY2002. For the fiscal years under review, 2000-2003, Freetown received \$874,276; \$969,826; \$1,115,300; and \$1,031,241 for a total of \$3,990,643 in state Chapter 70 Aid.

This report finds Freetown to be a 'Moderate' performing school district, which is marked by student achievement that is 'High' in English Language Arts (ELA) and 'Moderate' in math on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test. Since 2000, Freetown has also demonstrated improvement on its 'Moderate' MCAS test scores. In Freetown, 54.9% of the students scored below standard on the 2003 administration of the MCAS test.

During the ten years of education reform in Massachusetts, Lakeville's state Chapter 70 Aid increased by 293% from \$494,228 in FY1993 to \$1,943,979 in FY2002. For the fiscal years under review, 2000-2003, Lakeville received \$1,784,910; \$1,910,725; \$1,943,979; and \$1,943,979 for a total of \$7,583,593 in state Chapter 70 Aid.

This report finds Lakeville to be a 'Moderate' performing school district, which is marked by student achievement that is 'Moderate' in English Language Arts (ELA) and 'Low' in math on the MCAS tests. Since 2000, Lakeville has also demonstrated a decline in its 'Moderate' MCAS test scores. In Lakeville, 65% of the students scored below standard on the 2003 administration of the MCAS test.

During the ten years of education reform in Massachusetts, Freetown-Lakeville's state Chapter 70 Aid increased by 61% from \$3,462,472 in FY1993 to \$5,567,682 in FY2002. For the fiscal

years under review, 2000-2003, Freetown-Lakeville received \$4,934,486; \$5,298,861; \$5,567,682; and \$5,828,919 for a total of \$21,629,948 in state Chapter 70 Aid.

This report finds Freetown-Lakeville to be a 'Moderate' performing school district, which is marked by student achievement that is 'High' in English Language Arts (ELA) and 'Moderate' in math on the MCAS tests. Since 2000, Freetown-Lakeville has also demonstrated improvement on its 'Moderate' MCAS test scores. In Freetown-Lakeville, 57% of the students scored above standard on the 2003 administration of the MCAS test.

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

Part II A: Freetown

At Tier I, while particular attention was paid to the 2003 MCAS test, the EQA's review of Freetown's MCAS test results (2000-2003) is framed by the following five essential questions:

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

In order to respond accurately to these questions, the EQA did several types of analyses on the most current test data: a comparative analysis of the MCAS test data using state and district results by grade, ethnicity, and student category, a school-based analysis, a "performance gap" analysis, and a series of analyses to determine whether the mean responses for students in the district differed significantly from those of the state and between student subgroups within the district. Descriptive analyses of the test results for the 2003 MCAS exam revealed significant differences between students in the district and the average scores of students in Massachusetts. A discussion of the analyses follows.

Freetown vs. Massachusetts:

- In Freetown, the aggregate of the students scored *higher* than the aggregate of the state's students.

Freetown's totals vs. Freetown's subgroups:

- In Freetown, n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

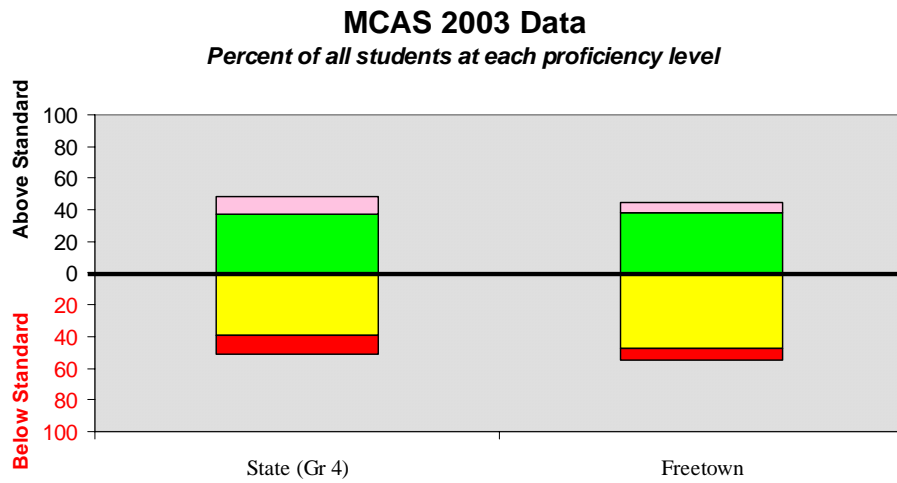
Assessment of MCAS Test Results 2000-2003

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Freetown, on the 2003 MCAS test, 54.9% of the students scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. This figure was 3.3 percentage points more than the state average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Freetown, on the 2003 MCAS test, in ELA, 43.7% of the students scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories, 0.2 percentage points less than the state's average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Freetown, on the 2003 MCAS test, in math, 66.0% of the students scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories, 6.7 percentage points more than the state's average percentages of students in those categories.

Figure/Table 1:

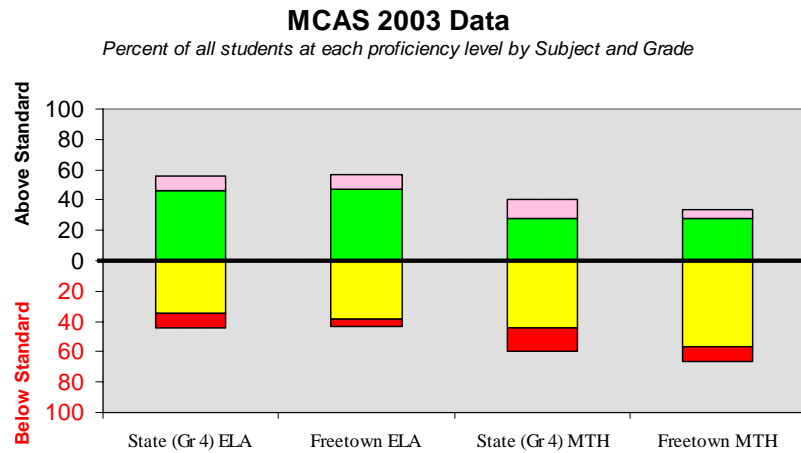


Advanced	11.4	7.3
Proficient	37.0	37.9
Needs Improv.	39.2	47.6
Warning	12.4	7.3

Analysis of Figure/Table 1:

- Freetown had 4.1% fewer students score in the ‘Advanced’ and 0.9% more score in the ‘Proficient’ categories than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Freetown had 8.4% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and 5.1% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.

Figure/Table 2:



	Advanced	10.4	8.7	12.4	5.8
	Proficient	45.8	47.6	28.3	28.2
	Needs Improv.	34.5	38.8	43.8	56.3
	Warning	9.4	4.9	15.5	9.7

Analysis of Figure/Table 2:

- Freetown had 1.7% fewer of its students score in the ‘Advanced’ and 1.8% more in the ‘Proficient’ categories in ELA than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Freetown had 4.3% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and 4.5% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in ELA than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Freetown had 6.6% fewer students score in the ‘Advanced’ and 0.1% fewer in the ‘Proficient’ categories in math than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Freetown had 12.5% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and 5.8% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in math than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.

Figure/Table 3:

Proficiency Index (MCAS 2003) by Grade

NOTE: Grade 4 only

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Freetown, n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

Figure/Table 4:

N-values by category

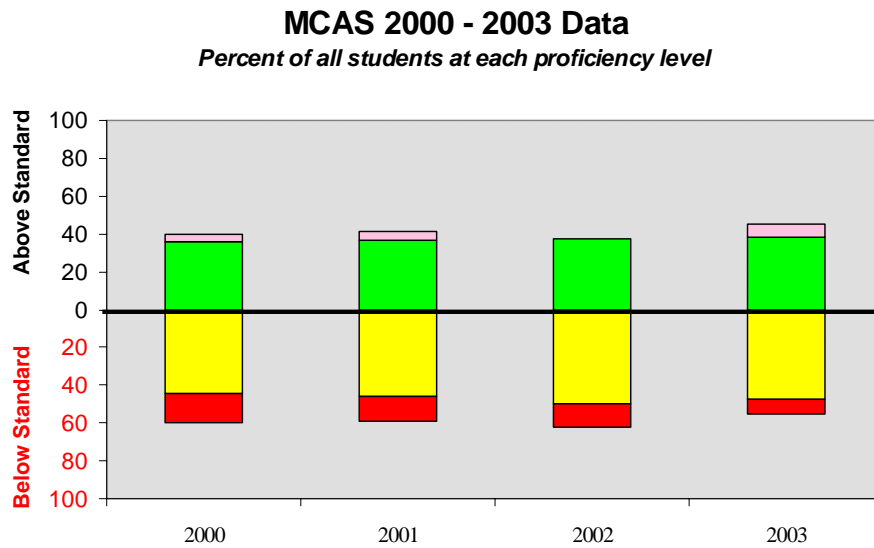
		ELA	Math
Freetown	Advanced	9	6
	Proficient	49	29
	Needs Improv	40	58
	Warning	5	10
Regular	Advanced	8	6
	Proficient	48	28
	Needs Improv	29	48
	Warning	3	6
Disability	Advanced	1	0
	Proficient	1	1
	Needs Improv	11	10
	Warning	2	4
Free Lunch/Y	Advanced	1	0
	Proficient	1	3
	Needs Improv	10	7
	Warning	1	3
Free Lunch/N	Advanced	8	6
	Proficient	48	26
	Needs Improv	30	51
	Warning	4	7
White	Advanced	9	6
	Proficient	47	28
	Needs Improv	37	55
	Warning	5	9

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

Preliminary Findings:

- In Freetown, 5.3% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 8.6% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index rose by 5.8 points and in math, by 1.6 points.
- In Freetown, in ELA, 11.1% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 8.6% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown, in math, 0.7% fewer students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 8.6% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.

Figure/Table 5:



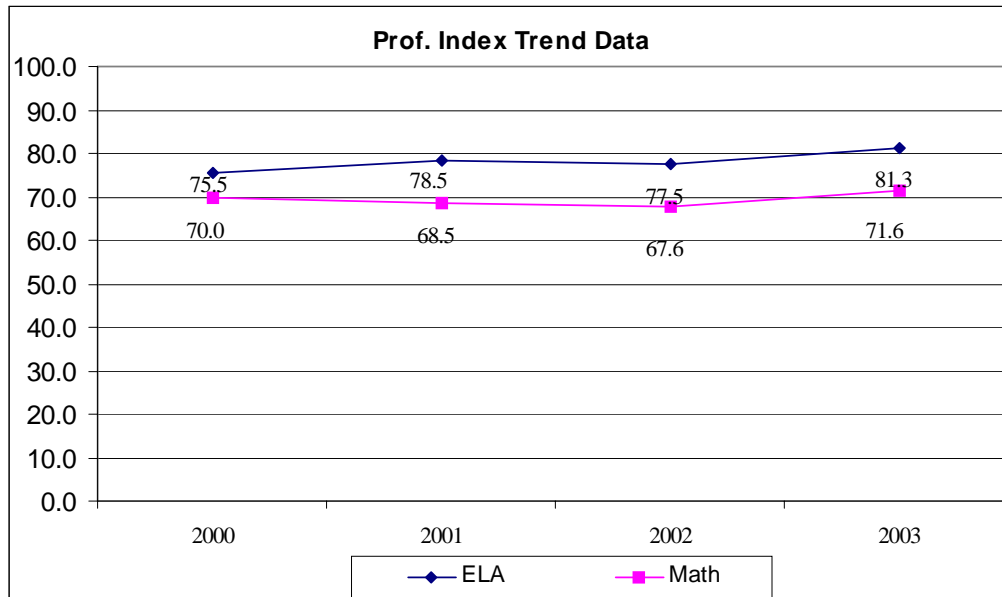
	Advanced	4.3	4.4	0.0	7.3
	Proficient	35.6	37.0	37.6	37.9
	Needs Improv.	44.2	45.7	49.5	47.6
	Warning	15.9	13.0	12.9	7.3

Analysis of Figure/Table 5:

- In Freetown, 7.3% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and 37.9% in the ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 4.3% and 35.6% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
- In Freetown, 47.6% of all students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement,’ and 7.3% in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 44.2% and 15.9% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.

Figure/Table 6:

Proficiency Index Trend Data MCAS Test 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003



	ELA				Math			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
Advanced	2.9	2.2	0.0	8.7	5.8	6.5	0.0	5.8
Proficient	42.3	46.7	48.0	47.6	28.9	27.1	27.5	28.2
Needs Improv.	41.4	41.3	42.0	38.8	47.1	50.0	56.9	56.3
Warning	13.5	9.8	10.0	4.9	18.3	16.3	16.7	9.7

Analysis of Figure/Table 6:

- In Freetown, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index rose by 5.8 points, from 75.5 to 81.3.
- In Freetown, in math, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index rose by 1.6 points, from 70.0 to 71.6.
- In ELA, 56.3% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 45.2% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
- In ELA, 43.7% of all students scored at the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 54.9% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.

- In math, 34.0% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 34.7% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
- In math, 66.0% of all students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 65.4% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Freetown, the n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Freetown, overall, all eligible students, including special education students participated in ELA and math assessments at the required levels.

Figure/Table 7:

MCAS Test Participation

	ELA	Math
Tested	100.00%	100.00%

Analysis of Table 7:

- On the 2003 MCAS test, Freetown’s student test participation rates in both ELA and math were 100.00%. These figures were 5.00% above the state’s standard for test participation, which is 95%.

Part II B: Lakeville

At Tier I, while particular attention was paid to the 2003 MCAS test, the EQA's review of Lakeville's MCAS test results (2000-2003) is framed by the following five essential questions:

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

In order to respond accurately to these questions, the EQA did several types of analyses on the most current test data: a comparative analysis of the MCAS test data using state and district results by grade, ethnicity, and student category, a school-based analysis, a "performance gap" analysis, and a series of analyses to determine whether the mean responses for students in the district differed significantly from those of the state and between student subgroups within the district. Descriptive analyses of the test results for the 2003 MCAS exam revealed significant differences between students in the district and the average scores of students in Massachusetts. A discussion of the analyses follows.

Lakeville vs. Massachusetts:

- In Lakeville, the aggregate of students in Lakeville scored *lower* than the aggregate of the state's students.

Lakeville's totals vs. Lakeville's subgroups:

- In Lakeville, n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

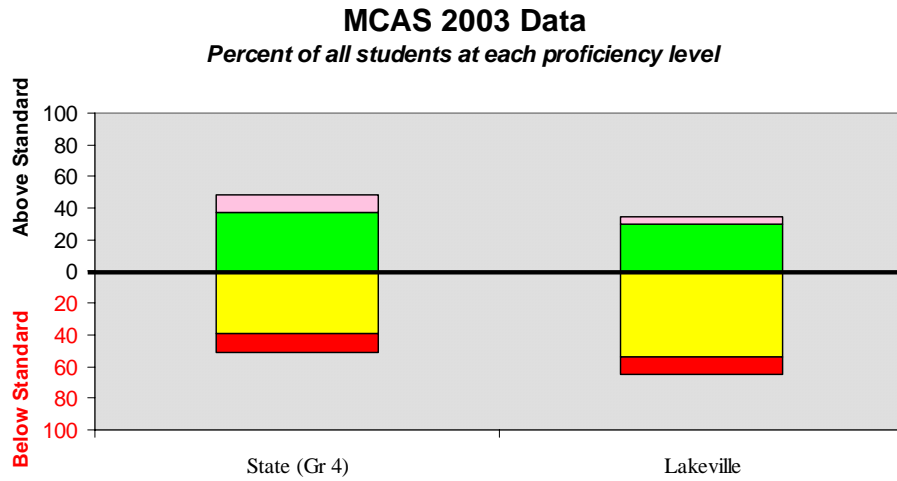
Assessment of the MCAS Test Results 2000-2003

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS test, 65.0% of the students scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. This figure was 13.4 percentage points more than the state average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS test, in ELA, 52.9% of the students scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories. This figure 9.0 was percentage points more than the state's average percentages of students in those categories.
- In Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS, in math, 77.2% of the students scored in those categories, 17.9 percentage points more than the state's average percentages of students in those categories.

Figure/Table 1:

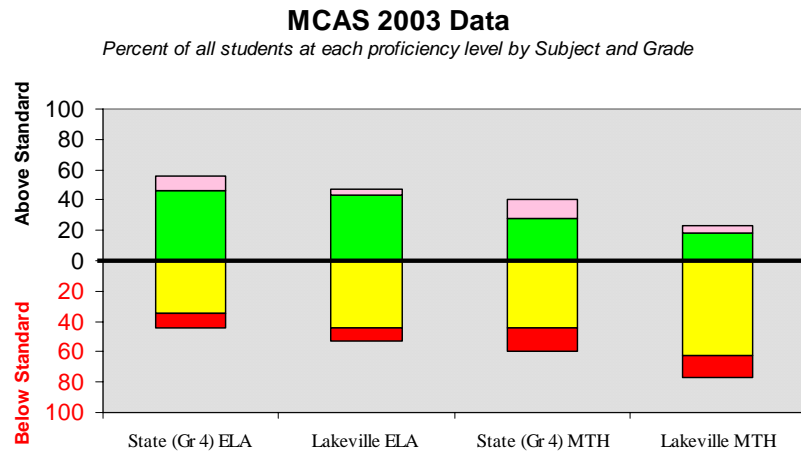


	Advanced	11.4	4.6
	Proficient	37.0	30.4
	Needs Improv.	39.2	53.6
	Warning	12.4	11.4

Analysis of Figure/Table 1:

- Lakeville had 10.8% fewer students score in the ‘Advanced,’ and 6.6% fewer score in the ‘Proficient’ categories than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Lakeville had 14.4% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement,’ and 1.0% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.

Figure/Table 2:



Advanced	10.4	4.3	12.4	5.0
Proficient	45.8	42.9	28.3	17.9
Needs Improv.	34.5	44.3	43.8	62.9
Warning	9.4	8.6	15.5	14.3

Analysis of Figure/Table 2:

- Lakeville had 6.1% fewer of its students score in the ‘Advanced,’ and 2.9% fewer in the ‘Proficient’ categories in ELA than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Lakeville had 9.8% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement,’ and 0.8% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in ELA than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Lakeville had 7.4% fewer students score in the ‘Advanced,’ and 10.4% fewer in the ‘Proficient’ categories in math than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Lakeville had 19.1% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement,’ and 1.2% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in math than the state’s students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.

Figure/Table 3:

Proficiency Index (MCAS 2003) by Grade

NOTE: Grade 4 only

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Lakeville, n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

Figure/Table 4:

N-values by category

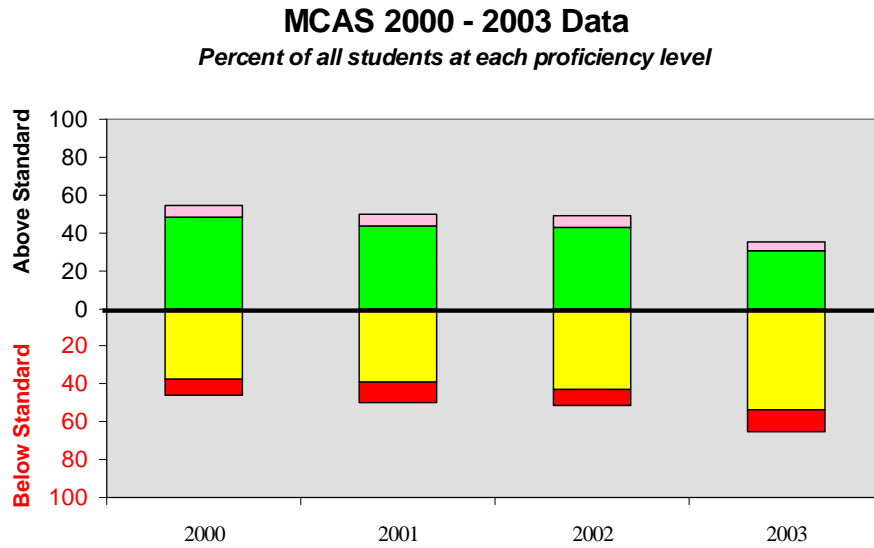
		ELA	Math
Lakeville	Advanced	6	7
	Proficient	60	25
	Needs Improv	62	88
	Warning	12	20
Regular	Advanced	6	7
	Proficient	57	25
	Needs Improv	50	76
	Warning	6	11
Disability	Advanced	0	0
	Proficient	3	0
	Needs Improv	12	12
	Warning	6	9
Free Lunch/Y	Advanced	0	1
	Proficient	5	2
	Needs Improv	8	9
	Warning	4	5
Free Lunch/N	Advanced	6	6
	Proficient	55	23
	Needs Improv	54	79
	Warning	8	15
White	Advanced	6	7
	Proficient	60	25
	Needs Improv	59	86
	Warning	12	19

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

Preliminary Findings:

- In Lakeville, 19.1% fewer students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 2.8% more students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Lakeville, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index fell by 9.7 points and in math, by 9.4 points.
- In Lakeville, in ELA, 15.4% fewer students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 2.8% more students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Lakeville, in math, 22.8% fewer students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000 and 2.9% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.

Figure/Table 5:



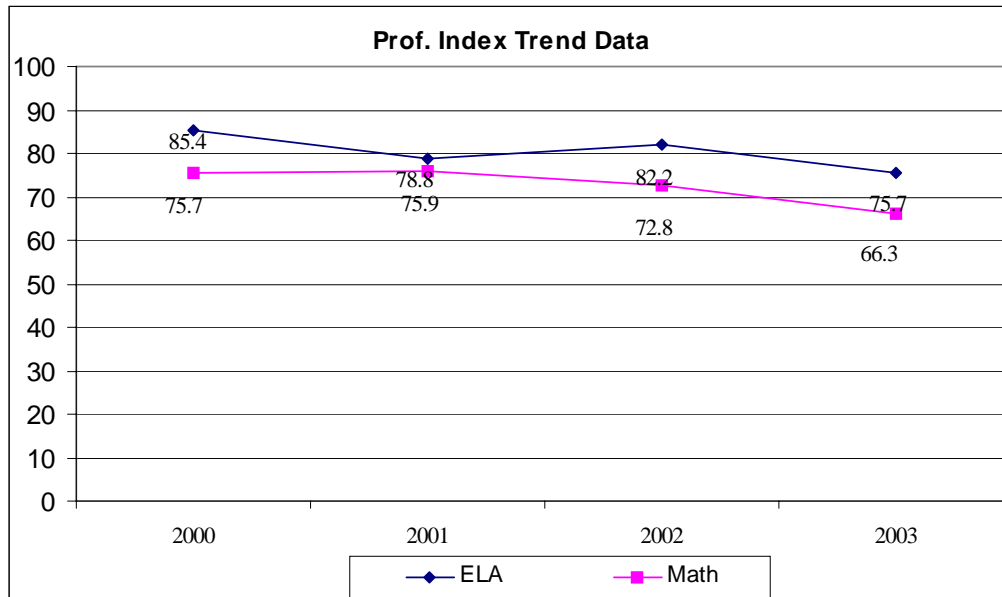
	Advanced	6.1	6.2	5.6	4.6
	Proficient	48.0	43.6	43.2	30.4
	Needs Improv.	37.3	38.8	42.6	53.6
	Warning	8.6	11.4	8.6	11.4

Analysis of Figure/Table 5:

- In Lakeville, 4.6% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and 30.4% in the ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 6.1% and 48.0% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
- In Lakeville, 53.6% of all students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and 11.4% in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 37.3% and 8.6% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.

Figure/Table 6:

Proficiency Index Trend Data MCAS 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003



	ELA				Math			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
Advanced	5.0	4.2	2.0	4.3	7.1	8.3	9.3	5.0
Proficient	57.6	47.9	54.6	42.9	38.6	39.3	31.8	17.9
Needs Improv.	31.7	39.6	38.8	44.3	42.9	37.9	46.4	62.9
Warning	5.8	8.3	4.6	8.6	11.4	14.5	12.6	14.3

Analysis of Figure/Table 6:

- In Lakeville, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index fell by 9.7 points, from 85.3 to 75.6.
- In Lakeville, in math, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index fell by 9.4 points, from 75.7 to 66.3.
- In Lakeville, in ELA, 47.2% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 62.6% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
- In Lakeville, in ELA, 52.9% of all students scored at the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 37.5% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.

- In math, 22.9% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 45.7% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
 - In math, 77.2% of all students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 54.3% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
4. **Equity of Improvement: How has the MCAS test performance for the district’s student subgroups change over time?**

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Lakeville, n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Lakeville, overall, all eligible students, including special education students, participated in ELA and math assessments at the required levels.

Figure/Table 7:

MCAS Test Participation

	ELA	Math
Tested	100.00%	100.00%

Analysis of Table 7:

- On the 2003 MCAS test, Lakeville’s student test participation rates in both ELA and math were 100.00%. These figures were 5.00% above the state’s standard for test participation, which is 95%.

Part II C: Freetown-Lakeville

At Tier I, while particular attention was paid to the 2003 MCAS test, the EQA's review of Freetown-Lakeville's MCAS test results (2000-2003) is framed by the following five essential questions:

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

In order to respond accurately to these questions, the EQA did several types of analyses on the most current test data: a comparative analysis of the MCAS test data using state and district results by grade, ethnicity, and student category, a school-based analysis, a "performance gap" analysis, and a series of analyses to determine whether the mean responses for students in the district differed significantly from those of the state and between student subgroups within the district. Descriptive analyses of the test results for the 2003 MCAS exam revealed significant differences between students in the district and the average scores of students in Massachusetts. A discussion of the analyses follows.

Freetown-Lakeville vs. Massachusetts:

- The aggregate of students in Freetown-Lakeville scored *higher* than the aggregate of the state's students.

Freetown-Lakeville's totals vs. Freetown-Lakeville's subgroups:

- The n-values for the subgroups in Freetown-Lakeville were too small for reporting.

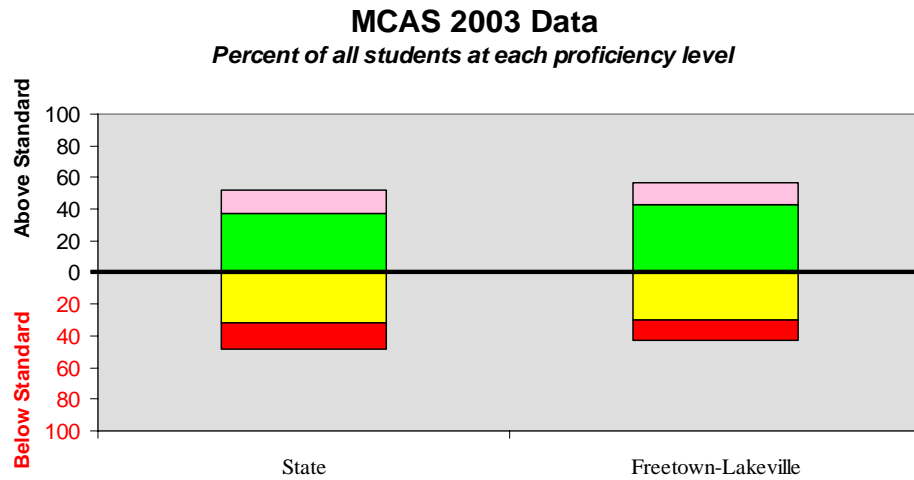
Assessment of MCAS Test Results 2000-2003

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Freetown-Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS test, 57.1% of the students scored in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories. This figure was 5.3 percentage points more than the state average for those categories.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS test, in ELA, 70.9% of the students scored in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories. The figure was 10.4 percentage points more than the state average for those categories.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, on the 2003 MCAS, in math, 44.1% of the students scored in those categories. This figure was 1.3 percentage points more than the state average for those categories.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, in 2003, the Proficiency Indices of 88.1 for ELA and 71.5 for math were 5.9 and 2.2 points lower than the statewide averages.

Figure/Table 1:

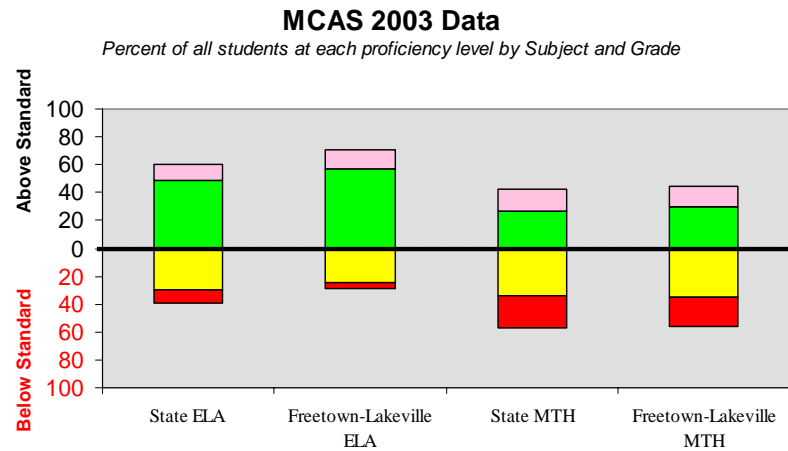


	Advanced	14.2	14.0
	Proficient	37.6	43.1
	Needs Improv.	32.2	30.1
	Warning/Failing	16.0	12.8

Analysis of Figure/Table 1:

- Freetown-Lakeville had 0.2% fewer students score in the ‘Advanced,’ and 5.5% more score in the ‘Proficient’ categories than the state average for students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Freetown-Lakeville had 2.1% fewer of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement,’ and 3.2% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories than the state average for students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.

Figure/Table 2:



Advanced	12.1	14.1	15.9	14.0
Proficient	48.4	56.8	26.9	30.1
Needs Improv.	30.2	24.5	34.1	35.5
Warning/Failing	8.9	4.6	23.1	20.5

Analysis of Figure/Table 2:

- Freetown-Lakeville had 2.0% more students score in the ‘Advanced,’ and 8.4% more in the ‘Proficient’ categories in ELA than the state average for those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Freetown-Lakeville had 5.7% fewer of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement,’ and 4.3% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in ELA than the state average for students in those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Freetown-Lakeville had 1.9% fewer students score in the ‘Advanced,’ and 3.2% more in the ‘Proficient’ categories in math than the state averages for those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.
- Freetown-Lakeville had 1.4% more of its students score in the ‘Needs Improvement,’ and 2.6% fewer in the ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in math than the state average for those categories on the 2003 MCAS test.

Figure/Table 3:

Proficiency Index (MCAS 2003) by Grade

	ELA	Math
Freetown-Lakeville	88.1	71.5
Grade 07	89.7	NA
Grade 08	NA	68.7
Grade 10	85.9	75.4

Analysis of Figure/Table 3:

- On average, in Freetown-Lakeville, the math PI was 16.6 points lower than that for ELA (The statewide average for this gap was 12.8 Proficiency Index points).
 - In ELA, the Proficiency Index in Grade 7 was 1.6 points higher than the district average of 88.1. The Grade 10 PI in ELA was 2.2 points lower than the district average.
 - In math, the Proficiency Index in Grade 10 was 3.9 points higher than the district average of 71.5. The Grade 8 PI in math was 2.8 points lower than the district average.
2. **Equity of Achievement: How does the MCAS test performance vary among the district's student subgroups?**

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Freetown-Lakeville, the n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

Figure/Table 4:

N-values by category

		ELA	Math
Freetown-Lakeville	Advanced	64	67
	Proficient	258	144
	Needs Improv	111	170
	Warning/Failing	21	98
Regular	Advanced	64	66
	Proficient	254	143
	Needs Improv	93	161
	Warning/Failing	8	61
Disability	Advanced	0	1
	Proficient	4	1
	Needs Improv	18	9
	Warning/Failing	13	37
Free Lunch/N	Advanced	64	67
	Proficient	258	144
	Needs Improv	111	170
	Warning/Failing	21	98
White	Advanced	64	67
	Proficient	255	142
	Needs Improv	107	165
	Warning/Failing	20	97

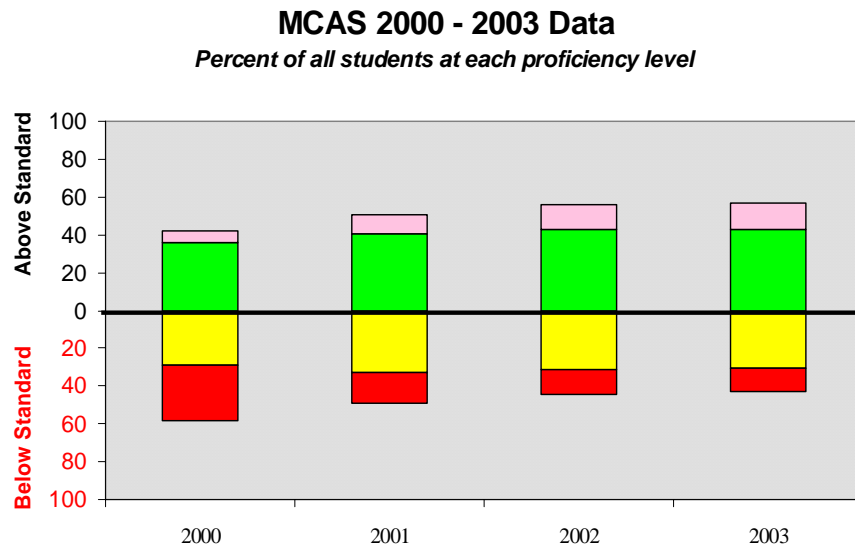
3. Improvement: How has the MCAS test performance for all students in the district changed over time?

Preliminary Findings:

- In Freetown-Lakeville, 15.1% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 16.1% more students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index rose by 10.8 points. In math, they rose by 15.0 points.

- In Freetown-Lakeville, in ELA, 15.7% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 11.9% fewer students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, in math, 15.4% more students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003 than in 2000, and 15.3% more students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category.

Figure/Table 5:



	Advanced	5.7	10.2	12.9	14.0
	Proficient	36.3	40.7	42.9	43.1
	Needs Improv.	29.2	32.9	31.6	30.1
	Warning/Failing	28.9	16.2	12.6	12.8

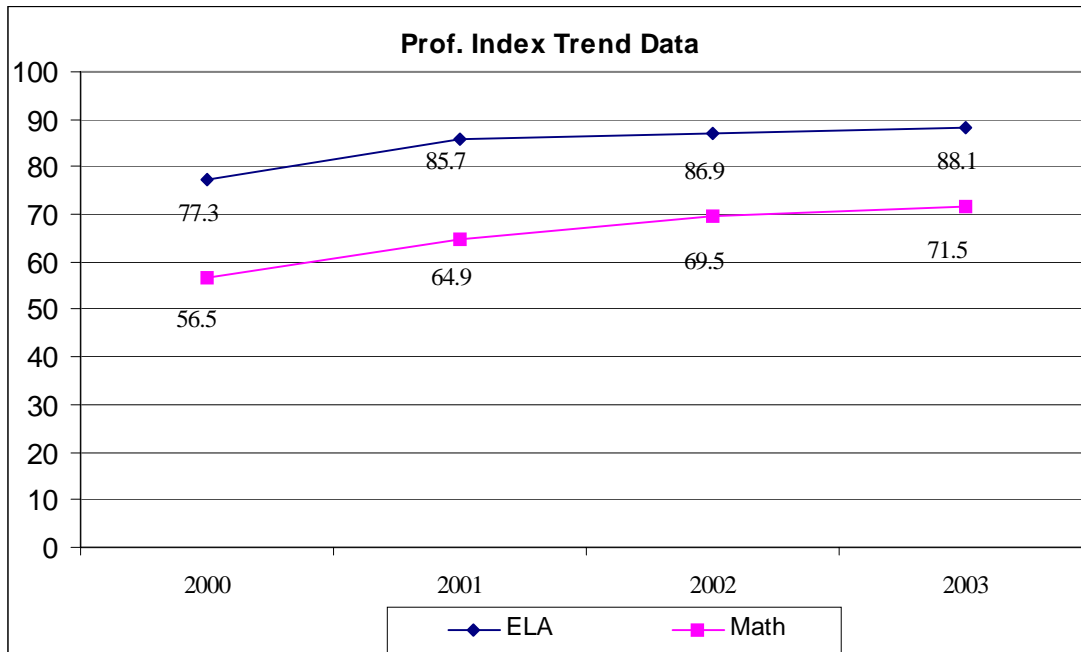
Analysis of Figure/Table 5:

- In Freetown-Lakeville, 14.0% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and 43.1% in the ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 5.7% and 36.3% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.

- In Freetown-Lakeville, 30.1% of all students scored at the 'Needs Improvement' and 12.8% in the 'Warning/Failing' categories in 2003, in contrast to 29.2% and 28.9% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.

Figure/Table 6:

Proficiency Index Trend Data MCAS 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003



	ELA				Math			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
Advanced	4.7	12.4	10.7	14.1	6.6	8.0	15.0	14.0
Proficient	50.5	56.6	58.0	56.8	22.1	24.9	27.7	30.1
Needs Improv.	28.3	23.3	25.2	24.5	30.1	42.4	38.0	35.5
Warning/Failing	16.5	7.8	6.0	4.6	41.2	24.7	19.2	20.5

Analysis of Figure/Table 6:

- In Freetown-Lakeville, in ELA, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index rose by 10.8 points, from 77.3 to 88.1.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, in math, performance ratings from 2000-2003 on the Proficiency Index rose by 15.0 points, from 56.5 to 71.5.
- In Freetown-Lakeville, in ELA, 70.9% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 55.2% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.

- In ELA, 29.1% of all students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 44.8% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
 - In math, 44.1% of all students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 28.7% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
 - In math, 56.0% of all students scored in the ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Warning/Failing’ categories in 2003, in contrast to 71.3% of all students scoring in these categories in 2000.
4. **Equity of Improvement:** How has the MCAS test performance for the district’s student subgroups changed over time?

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Freetown-Lakeville, the n-values for the subgroups were too small for reporting.

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

Preliminary Finding(s):

- In Freetown-Lakeville, eligible students participated in ELA and math assessments at the required levels.

Figure/Table 7:

MCAS Test Participation

	ELA	Math
Tested	97.63%	98.15%
NTA	0.22%	0.21%
NTM	0.65%	0.62%
NTO	1.51%	1.03%

Analysis of Table 7:

- On the 2003 MCAS test, Freetown-Lakeville’s student test participation rates in ELA and math were 97.63% and 98.15%, respectively. These figures were 2.63% and 3.15% above the state’s standard for test participation, which is 95%.

Part III: Summary and Preliminary Findings by Domain

Domain A: Assessment and Evaluation

Standards ▼ Indicators▶	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Domain A – Assessment & Evaluation									
S1 - Student Assessment									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Poor	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	6
Unsatisfactory	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
S2 – Participation									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	N/A	4
Poor	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	N/A	2
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	N/A	1
S3 - Evaluation Processes									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory	0	0	0	1	1	0	N/A	N/A	2
Poor	0	1	1	0	0	1	N/A	N/A	3
Unsatisfactory	1	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	1

Standard 1. STUDENT ASSESSMENT: District and building administrators carefully administer statewide assessments and teachers regularly assess the performance of their students relative to state and local student performance standards, and analyze aggregate and individual assessment results to improve curricula, instructional practices, and supplementary and remedial programs.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- During the period under review, the district used no standardized tests besides the MCAS tests.
- During the period under review, no formal training was provided to all of the district’s teachers in the use of student assessment data.
- During the period under review, the classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005 exceeded the state Competency Determination (CD) rate in both ELA and math.

Indicators:

1. The district has clear assessment policies and procedures that direct the regular evaluation of classroom, school, district, and state assessment results.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The new central administration, which came to office in July 2003, said that they were developing district procedures and practices on the use of assessment to inform instruction. During the period under review, the MCAS tests were the only standardized assessment instruments used by the district, under the direction of the director of instructional services. During the period under review, the administration distributed the MCAS test results but did not specifically direct that they be used to inform instruction. The new administration focused on the development of local quarterly assessments and a rubric for ELA and math. The district had Grade Level Expectations for grades K-4. Interviewees described district principals as results-focused. Site MCAS test plans prescribed supplementary support.

Interviewees stated that the district's policy manual was adopted in 1999 as a complete document (acquired from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, MASC), on a joint vote of the Superintendency Union #34 school committee (the regional district's overarching school committee) and the Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Committee. Interviewees also indicated that the committees planned to amend the manual's policies as needed.

The revised and updated policies of 2003 directed that multiple assessments take place under the coordination of a designated administrator. The administrator was responsible for the scheduling, dissemination, and collection of tests, as well as for reporting and interpreting all group test results each year. District policy directed that assessment instruments should generate data that could be compared within the district by year, and with other school districts to the extent required by the Department of Education (DOE).

The school committee had a standing policy subcommittee, as well as a policy subcommittee for assessment. The latter was not a standing subcommittee, but was created specifically for the purpose of revising the elementary schools' report card to be standards-based. The report card was phased in for grades K-2 the first year, and for Grade 3 during the period under review.

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

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: Interviewees indicated that, during the period under review, the MCAS test administration was not standardized. In previous administrations of the tests, the schools started at different times. In some instances, students were tested after they had completed their arts area specials, rather than at the start of the school day. Interviewees attributed this to the lack of a directive from the central office on procedural expectations. By the date of the review, the central office met with district principals to review administrative expectations.

3. The district regularly employs criterion-referenced tests, norm-referenced tests, or other standardized tests in addition to the MCAS test to assess the progress of all student populations.

EQA Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: In an April 30, 2004, electronic mailed response to an EQA inquiry, the district indicated that, during the period under review, aside from the MCAS test, the district did not administer any standardized (norm-referenced) tests to grades K-8. The district did not have any immediate plans to implement such tests. The electronic mail correspondence also indicated that, while the district recognized the crucial role of student performance data in the ongoing improvement of its schools, it was confident that the use of the MCAS test data, combined with the locally-produced quarterly assessment tools it planned to introduce, would

lead to improved test scores. The district indicated that, in addition to the MCAS tests, other assessments used at the middle school for diagnostic purposes included the Stanford Diagnostic Math Test (purple and brown editions), the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, and TOWLS. For special education purposes, the district indicated that the following assessments and procedures were used:

ACTeRS Scales for ADHD (parent & teacher versions)	Sentence Completion Test
AGS Early Screening Profiles	Sentence & Story Completion Tasks
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Test	Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (4 th edition)
Bender Visual-Motor Gestalt Test	Tasks of Emotional Development
Brigrance Inventory of Basic Skills	Thematic Apperception Test
Brigrance Screening Instruments (various versions)	Walker-McConnell Test of Social Competence & School Adjustment
Connors Rating Scales (various versions)	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (1 st & 2 nd editions)
Detroit Test of Learning Aptitude (4 th edition)	
Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (3 rd edition)	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (3 rd & 4 th editions)
Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration	Wechsler Preschool & Primary Scale of Intelligence (revised & 3 rd editions)
House-Tree-Person Figure Drawings	Woodcock Johnston Battery (Cognitive & Achievement) (4 th edition)
Human Figure Drawing	
Informal Tasks & Observations	Woodcock Reading Mastery Test
Key Math (revised)	
Kinetic Family Drawing	
Motor-Free Visual Perception Test	
Peabody Individual Achievement Test, Revised	
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (3 rd edition)	
Rorschach Test	
School Behavior Checklist	
School Performance Questionnaire	

The district used the following assessments for Title I purposes at the elementary schools: the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, the Metropolitan Readiness Test in reading and math, the Stanford Diagnostic Math Test, and the Informal Reading Inventory (Burns/Roe).

4. Regular analysis of assessment results informs improvements to:
 - a. curricula,
 - b. instructional practices,
 - c. supplementary and remedial programs and services,
 - d. professional development, and
 - e. purchasing and provisioning for improved student achievement.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The district improvement plan (*Freetown and Lakeville District Schools Strategic Planning Profile as a Corollary with the NEASC Accreditation Process*) and the school improvement plans (SIPs) did not address improving student achievement through regular analysis of assessment results. Interviewees indicated that, during the period under review, the district had curriculum teams for each discipline that met monthly to use the results of item analysis to determine gaps in instruction. For example, “simple machines” was a science area in which the district students did not score well. Vertical articulation discussions revealed that one grade assumed that the next grade taught simple machines, while the next grade assumed that the previous grade taught them. The cause of the problem was identified and the problem resolved in articulation discussion. The district anticipated improved scores in this area.

Data review also indicated that open-response math questions were a weakness at the elementary school level. The district purchased Problem Solver materials to address this. To address an identified area of concern in ELA long composition, the district used the Links program at both the elementary and middle school levels. The elementary school principals introduced new staff to the program. In response to lowered math scores at the Assawompsett Elementary School in Lakeville, the staff sought both the cause and potential instructional interventions to increase the scores.

Interviewees indicated that the district implemented supplementary and remedial programs and services as a result of the review of the assessment results. The programs cited included the

MCAS test remediation programs, after-school academic support, and a National Honor Society (NHS) tutoring program at the high school.

At the middle school, programs included an MCAS test tutoring program, after-school academic support, peer leaders, peer tutoring, skills classes, remedial reading, the NJHS tutoring program, Title I, the MCAS math test tutors, and additional instruction during daily individual team time. At the elementary schools, support services were provided through Title I reading and math, part-time tutors, and paraprofessionals and parent volunteers providing individualized instruction.

After the review of assessment results, math became the primary focus of professional development offerings in grades K-8 across the district. This was the recommendation of the district's long-standing professional development council, but interviewees noted that principals also had considerable latitude in determining professional development offerings.

The district determined budget expenditures with the goal of improving student achievement through the review of assessment results. This resulted in the purchase of Problem Solver supplementary elementary math materials, the replacement of an antiquated (1989) geometry textbook, and the purchase of a new Scott Foresman elementary reading program. The data review allowed the district to give the school committee advance notice of the large budgetary expenditure for math textbooks.

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

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The district reviewed MCAS test scores, but data analysis did not result in strategic planning until 2003. Interviewees indicated that, during the period under review, that the district had no written procedure for the distribution of assessment results to staff. The common practice was to photocopy and disseminate assessment data and individual student data to the principals for discussion and review with their respective staffs. Interviewees noted that the principals took

the lead in and responsibility for this task but worked with the director of instructional services. Though results were disseminated, there was no district-level data analysis. The principals led school-specific data review. The district strategic plan and the SIPs did not address improving student achievement through regular analysis of assessment results. Interviewees indicated that no training on using student test results was provided for all teachers, and that much more needed to be done in this area.

6. District administrators, building administrators, and teachers demonstrate that they have the skills to use aggregate and individual test analyses to improve instructional programs and services for all student populations.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: During the period under review, the district had no policy on data analysis. The strategic plan and the SIPs did not address improving student achievement through regular analysis of assessment results. A district administrator indicated that the district's staff were not trained to and were unable to perform the type of analysis that would lead to student improvement. Principals took the lead in training staff. The district's model for in-service and training on aggregate and individual test analysis involved curriculum leaders, compensated by a stipend, at the elementary schools. Both of the district's elementary school principals worked with their staffs to develop improved instructional practices based on data analysis. A district administrator indicated that the principals and the curriculum leaders took a three-hour Train-the-Trainer session.

In 2003-2004, the district contracted with the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth to provide trainings in algebra problem-solving techniques and in shared decision-making. These were implemented with the goal of getting the staff comfortable with the group process in looking at data and making decisions based on data review.

The new administration was developing procedures for monitoring instruction for improvement. The new administration agreed that district principals had data-analysis skills.

7. The district educates all of its students to meet or exceed the Competency Determination (CD) standard by their senior year.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Ninety-seven percent of the class of 2003 met or exceeded the CD, as did 97% of the class of 2004, and 85% of the class of 2005. Interviewees indicated that, during the period under review, the district used curriculum and instruction initiatives such as the MCAS test remediation programs and after-school academic support at the high school. At the middle school, support included an MCAS test tutoring program, after-school academic support, peer leaders, peer tutoring, skills classes, remedial reading, Title I, MCAS math test tutors, and additional instruction during daily individual team time. And, at the elementary schools, support services were provided through Title I reading and math, part-time tutors, and paraprofessionals and parent volunteers providing individualized instruction.

The high school administration was aware that the issue of student attendance needed attention. Guidance counselors coordinated the high school's efforts to improve student attendance. A counselor intern tutoring position was created to focus on students who did not come to school regularly. The school enrolled these students in remedial classes. At the beginning of the year of the review, there were twenty-five students enrolled in these classes. There were ten at the time of the review.

8. Classroom assessment standards, practices, and expectations for teachers and students are consistently linked with learning standards articulated in the state curriculum frameworks.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: Interviewees indicated that, during the period under review, a small number of teachers worked with a consultant to align the curriculum. However, the district administrators at the time found the results of the alignment to not be user-friendly at the middle school level, and so the results were not used. The new district administration made the alignment of curriculum a priority. A team of ten Grade 5 teachers became a model for success with their "Writing Across the Curriculum" effort, complete with rubrics and benchmarks. The director of instructional

services and the principal worked with teacher teams to make the standard alignment more immediate and user-friendly. Student expectations were not presented formally or systematically. The district sporadically presented rubrics and grade-level expectations to teachers and parents. These rubrics were developed locally and internally.

Standard 2. PARTICIPATION: The district and all of its schools have documented policies, procedures, and practices that meet federal and state participation and attendance standards. Data on participation in state and local tests are monitored and assessed to ensure participation and opportunity for all students and all subgroups.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Student participation rates in the 2003 ELA and math state assessments exceeded the state standard of 95%.
- Teacher absences in the district ranged from 9.5 days at the high school to 16.7 days at one elementary school. At the time of the on-site review, the district did not evaluate the effects of teacher absence on student achievement.
- Approximately 15% of the district's teachers did not have renewals of state certification in their personnel files.

Indicators:

1. The district and each of its schools have clear policies, procedures, expectations, and practices that require all students to attend and participate in all mandatory and appropriate assessments.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Freetown-Lakeville's student participation rates in the 2003 MCAS tests were 97.63% in ELA and 98.15% in math, exceeding the state's standard of 95%.

2. The district and all of its schools regularly monitor and evaluate data on student and staff attendance.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: Attachment C, “Report of Instructional Staff Attendance for 2003,” indicated that at Freetown Elementary School, teachers were absent from the classroom 8.2 days on average (excluding the case of a long-term substitute). At Assawompsett Elementary School, teachers were absent an average of 16.7 days in 2003. At Freetown-Lakeville Middle School, teachers were absent from in the classroom 13.5 days on average. At Apponequet High School, teachers were absent from the classroom 9.5 days on average. The district monitored staff attendance, but there was no documented evidence that the district evaluated this data. There were no policies that specifically addressed staff attendance, but policies did establish the number of days allowed for various categories.

Student attendance rates were 94.3% at the high school, 94.2% at Freetown Elementary, and 93.7% at Assawompsett Elementary. The state average was 94.9%.

3. The district maintains accurate records on attendance, suspensions, discipline, and dropouts by student subgroup populations and frequently:
 - a. analyzes these records;
 - b. uses the analyses to improve participation and involvement of all students;
 - c. tracks students who have ceased to participate in school programs

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: District administrators indicated that the district analyzed records of student attendance, suspensions, discipline, and dropouts. At the elementary school level, the nurse contacted the home after three or four absences. At the middle school, guidance staff contacted the home after seven or eight absences. At the high school, guidance staff contacted the home after fifteen absences. The district did not disaggregate attendance data by subgroup due to the small numbers of students in the subgroups.

4. The district actively encourages student attendance in conformity with their policies and expectations.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: There were parent-student handbooks for all four schools. Each addressed student attendance. The district eliminated the attendance officer due to budget constraints. Freetown Elementary had a 94.2% attendance rate. Assawompsett Elementary's rate was 93.7%. The regional middle and high schools had a combined attendance rate of 94.3%. The rates were all compatible with the state average of 94.9%. Principals at all schools indicated that they were vigilant in monitoring attendance and described follow-up procedures at the three levels.

5. The district collects and uses data on:
- a. student attendance and evaluates the effects of student attendance on performance and achievement, and
 - b. staff attendance and evaluates the effects of staff attendance on staff performance and student achievement.

EQA Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: A review of the district policies, and interviews with district and school administrators, indicated that there were no documents addressing the evaluation of the effects of student and staff attendance on staff performance and student achievement. Interviews with district and school administrators indicated that no process existed for evaluating the effects of staff absence on student achievement.

6. The district maintains clear and accurate records on:
- a. student waivers for LEP and ALT status for MCAS assessment;
 - b. wavers for staff regarding certification and progress toward certification.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The director of special education provided documentation indicating that the district had six students who qualified for and took the alternate MCAS assessment. The district applied for and was granted authorization by the DOE for one student to take the MCAS at home.

Attachment B indicated that one teacher in the district did not possess full certification in September 2003. However, the director of instructional services indicated that the teacher was fully certified at the time of the on-site review.

A random sample of approximately 20% of the teachers' personnel files indicated that 85% of the faculty had active certificates. Fifteen percent of the folders did not have state renewal certificates.

7. The district focuses on and improves educational outcomes, including English language proficiency for all English language learners (ELL) and:
 - a. maintains clear, accurate, program and individual records of all English language learners;
 - b. annually reviews disaggregated data from standardized tests, attendance, suspension, discipline, and dropout records;
 - c. uses data analyses to review programs and services to English language learners and focuses on areas of needed improvement.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: According to Tier I analysis of student achievement and MCAS test data, there were too few students in the subgroups to allow valid and reliable analysis. Interviewees indicated that school administrators reviewed individual English Language Learner (ELL) students' records with regard to standardized tests, attendance, suspensions, discipline, and dropouts. The district indicated that, because of their small numbers, analysis of ELL-subgroup data did not inform substantive program changes, although it did inform academic assistance to individual students.

Standard 3. EVALUATION PROCESSES: The district uses student assessment data in its development, implementation, and analysis of school, program, and personnel evaluation. The evaluation process focuses on accountability for administrators, teachers, and staff, and one of the goals of the process is the improvement of achievement for all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- Administrators indicated that they were overwhelmed by the staff evaluation schedule. One principal described the process as “numbing,” and others stated that it left little time for other tasks.
- Overall, the evaluation process conforms with the requirements of the law. However, the individual evaluations were generally *pro forma* and not valuable from the point of view of personal growth and professional development.
- The results of various staff and program evaluations were rarely analyzed in a collective sense, or used to drive or inform change in the district.

Indicators:

1. The district employs a system of:
 - a. school evaluation that focuses on accountability for administrators;
 - b. program evaluation that focuses on accountability for administrators and staff;
 - c. personnel evaluation that focuses on accountability for all administrators, teachers, and staff.

EQA Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: During the period under review, the district had a system for the evaluation of its teachers and administrators. According to interviews with administrators and principals, as well as a review of a random sample of evaluations, the district did not formally hold staff or programs accountable. Neither administrators nor teachers were required to set annual goals. As a result, evaluations tended to be descriptions of past events, for instance a lesson that was observed (in the case of teachers). Evaluations were rarely prescriptive, though the teachers’ contract did specify that evaluations should “provide specific written recommendations for

improving performance.” Administrators indicated that current and detailed job descriptions were not available for many of the district’s staff positions.

2. The results of the district’s program evaluation are analyzed and used to inform needed changes or modifications in the district’s programs and services that would most likely result in improved student achievement.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: According to interviews with administrators and principals, the district did not have a formal system for program evaluation and modification during the period under review. Interviewees indicated that the district had a very top-down model of administration and that the superintendent promoted programs or initiatives based on his priorities, rather than on formal program or staff evaluations. The superintendent involved all of the schools in the NEASC accreditation process and used the results to drive some initiatives. However, the NEASC process is based on self-study and is not specifically data-driven. Principals explained that the superintendent placed a low value on MCAS test (and other standardized-test) data. His philosophy was that good schools produced good students.

3. There is an ongoing process to:
 - a. monitor, and
 - b. evaluate the quality, adequacy, and effectiveness of the curriculum and instructional programs.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The district had multi-grade curriculum teams. They met for six half-days per year. According to administrators and principals, assessment data was not the driving force behind curriculum development during the period under review. A number of the district curricula were only recently aligned to the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. An administrator explained that in the past the district denied that there was a deficiency in math, even though the MCAS assessment data clearly showed this.

4. The district's evaluation procedure for administrators is aligned with the requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The EQA team reviewed all administrator performance evaluations. All administrator evaluation forms were in full compliance with the standards of the state education reforms of 1993. However, they made no reference to the SIPs or to annual goals for student achievement.

5. The district's evaluation procedure for teachers is aligned with the requirements of the Education Reform Act.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Principals indicated that multiple teachers were observed each year, using protocols developed by Research for Better Teaching, an Acton-based contractor whose materials on performance evaluation were widely used in the northeast. The CMR 35.00 regulations dealing with the state standards for effective teaching (which the teachers' contract quotes verbatim), were also used as a framework for assessing observed behaviors. The duties of a teacher, as listed in the contract, also framed evaluation. In addition, employability criteria were considered.

Observations were discussed with each teacher within a prescribed timeframe. The observations were written up and filed. Written observations did not follow the sequential prescriptions of the education reform law, but principals indicated that they used the contract language as a guide when observing teachers.

The evaluation files were orderly, neat, and easily recovered. A review of files disclosed that a small percentage (15%) of teachers either had an expired certificate or an out-of-state certificate (one teacher), with no Massachusetts certificate or waiver. About 80% of the teachers' certificates expired in June 2004.

6. In order to improve achievement for all students, the district uses disaggregated assessment scores to:
 - a. evaluate specific aspects of achievement, so that data can be analyzed to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction,
 - b. set priorities for professional development, and
 - c. reallocate staff and resources to improve achievement levels for all student populations.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The student population was homogeneous: 98% White. Twelve percent of the district's students were enrolled in the special education program, and 8.4% were eligible for free or reduced lunch. The district had no students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The district did not analyze disaggregated assessment data during the period under review.

Domain B: Curriculum and Instruction

Standards ▼	Indicators▶	1	2	3	4	5	5aVoc	6	7	8	9	Total
Domain B –Curriculum & Instruction												
S4 – Curriculum												
Excellent		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory		1	0	0	0	0	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Poor		0	1	1	0	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Unsatisfactory		0	0	0	1	1	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
S5 - Instruction: Expectations & Policies												
Excellent		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory		0	0	0	1	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Poor		1	0	1	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Unsatisfactory		0	1	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
S6 - Access To Quality Education Programs												
Excellent		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory		1	0	1	1	1	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	5
Poor		0	1	0	0	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
Unsatisfactory		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
S7 - Professional Development & Training												
Excellent		0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
Satisfactory		0	1	0	1	0	N/A	1	0	N/A	N/A	3
Poor		1	0	1	0	0	N/A	0	1	N/A	N/A	3
Unsatisfactory		0	0	0	0	1	N/A	0	0	N/A	N/A	1

Standard 4. CURRICULUM: The district, each of its schools, and programs utilize curricula that are aligned with the state curriculum frameworks in the core academic subjects of English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science and technology, history and social science, and world languages. The curricula are current, academically sound, and clearly understood by all who administer and teach in the district.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The district’s curriculum was not fully aligned with state curriculum frameworks. There was no horizontal alignment beyond sporadic horizontal alignment at the elementary school level.
- The district employed a director of curriculum and instruction, who led stipend-supported teachers in the curriculum alignment effort, but time and resources constrained training, supervision, and mentoring.

- Principals monitored teachers' curriculum delivery through classroom observations and the use of the curriculum guides to plan instruction. The standards of effective teaching in CMR 35.00, the *Research for Better Teaching* protocols, and curriculum frameworks informed principals' evaluations of teachers. These frameworks were not aligned with the MCAS test results.

Indicators:

1. A curriculum leader is assigned to and active in every school in the district.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Each school had a curriculum leader. During the period under review, the district employed a director of instructional services to oversee curriculum and instruction.

At the two elementary schools, the curriculum leaders were teachers with full-time teaching loads. At the middle school, the curriculum leaders were eliminated in the last budget cycle, but they were in the FY2005 budget. The principal oversaw curriculum at the middle school. At the high school, department heads with abbreviated teaching loads were responsible for curriculum and cafeteria and study hall duties. Principals oversaw and participated in the curriculum alignment process. The district curriculum director oversaw vertical and horizontal articulation. He supervised and directed the district's curricula and instructional programs. Principals provided on-site curriculum leadership at all levels.

2. Teachers in all of the district's schools:
 - a. have access to the current curriculum,
 - b. are trained in their use, and
 - c. are expected to use them in planning and delivering instruction.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: District administrators indicated that all teachers had access to the district's approved curriculum guides for their grades and levels. At the elementary school level, curriculum guides for the previous grade and the following grade and level were also available. At the time of the

on-site review, these guides were not completely aligned with the state curriculum frameworks. The guides were on the district's website.

The teaching staff had various levels of formal, district-sponsored curriculum training. Training in using the curriculum took place in stages as time and resources permitted. Some training was school-level, some district-level. Some of the offerings were in-house, while others were contracted services. Training was often ad hoc, initiated by principals. The district planned better alignment of curriculum with state standards.

In interviews, principals indicated that teachers were expected to use curriculum guides in planning and delivering instruction. Principals observed teachers as part of their performance appraisal duties. Classroom application of appropriate curriculum was included in their criteria for the observation of teaching. Some principals indicated that they reviewed plan books and lesson plans periodically to ensure alignment with the state frameworks. There was inadequate supervision, training, and budget support to ensure consistent training in, implementation of, and oversight of the district's curriculum.

3. The district has an established, well-documented process that involves teachers in the annual review and/or revision of curriculum based on the analyses of results of standardized tests.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: During the period under review, the district administered no standardized tests other than the MCAS tests. In the elementary schools, the MCAS test results in both ELA and math were used as a foundation for examining curriculum. There was evidence that curriculum was changed as a result. The Grade 3 MCAS test reading scores improved as a result of this effort. Initially, principals led this effort. The director of instructional services and the vertical curriculum teams also participated.

There was a system for annual curriculum review and revision, but it was not well-documented in the district strategic plan or the SIPs. There were summer curriculum writing workshops, and teachers reviewed their products before new curriculum was introduced. The district only recently began using the MCAS test data to rewrite curricula. During the period under review,

there was minimal district emphasis on using the MCAS test results as a basis for curriculum and instructional alignment. Schools led the way in this effort, but it was not a district-wide initiative.

4. Modifications and/or revisions to curricula are:
 - a. evaluated for their effectiveness in improving equitable student achievement for all student populations, and
 - b. revised as necessary and disseminated to staff.

EQA Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: Special education students constituted the only statistically significant subgroup. There were periodic changes to the curriculum, which were passed on to teachers through six half-day workshops. Interviews and a review of the district strategic plan and the SIPs indicated that, during the period under review, the district had no system for evaluating curriculum modifications, although the district had the goal of meeting or exceeding state standards. District administrators indicated that there was no program evaluation that led to curriculum modifications. Principals described their own in-school efforts to update curriculum using the MCAS test results, but there was no evidence of a system-wide, scheduled series of reviews of vertical and horizontal curricula.

The district-approved policy book addressed the curriculum development and modification process, but interviewees did not refer to those policies (see policies IGA/IGB/IGD/IGE/IGE-R).

5. The district regularly implements an established, well-documented process to ensure:
 - a. horizontal instructional program articulation throughout the system, and
 - b. sequencing and alignment of learning goals and expectations from one Grade to the next – K – 12.
 - c. alignment with the state curriculum frameworks across all Grades PreK-12.

EQA Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The two elementary school principals addressed horizontal curriculum as time permitted. The middle school principal was responsible for curriculum coordination at his school, and high school department heads were responsible for content-specific curriculum

coordination at their level. Principals indicated that, in 2000, they initiated a concerted effort to review curriculum using the MCAS test data, so that building curriculum would be driven by test results, based on “records” the principals “could see.” Classroom teachers made modifications during release time (six half-days per year). The effort was school-based, resulting in different texts being used as curricula support. The district lacked a process to ensure systematic and uniform horizontal curriculum.

The published curriculum guides referred to both the state frameworks and the learning goals. The schools reviewed these documents, aligning them with state frameworks and connecting expectations with standardized test results, but this was not a district-wide initiative or expectation.

During the period under review, the district’s curriculum was not fully aligned with state frameworks. However, at the time of the on-site visit, there was evidence that the district and its schools were aware of the problem and were devoting energy to solving it.

6. Staffing levels are adequate to deliver the district’s curriculum to all students and student subgroups.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Interviews and documents indicated that the typical class size at the elementary school level was approximately 22, although some classes had as many as 25 students. The typical middle school class was approximately 27 students, with some having as many as 30. The target size for lab classes was 22 students, but interviewees indicated that at times lab classes reached 30 students, with more than one student per station. Interviewees indicated that class size at the high school for most of the period under review was 25 students.

Standard 5. INSTRUCTION: EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES: The district uses the analysis of student achievement data to develop policies and documents that express high expectations for student achievement, the employment of quality faculty and staff, and clear expectations of the use of effective instructional methods strategies and practices to teach all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The district did not have a well-defined instructional program.
- The district employed teachers who were highly qualified in their areas of responsibility.

Indicators:

1. The district has implemented instructional programs that:
 - a. are designed to meet the assessed needs of its students, and
 - b. include the practices, resources and procedures needed to support the instructional programs.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: Principals and district administrators indicated that there was no district-wide instructional program. Policy IA of the district policy manual dated 1999 directed the staff to provide “a high-quality, effective, and ever-improving instructional program.” Interviewees explained that different schools had different programs.

2. Improving and/or sustaining student achievement is the shared responsibility of: the district, each of its schools, the students, their parents, and the community.

EQA Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: During a review of district documentation, such as the policy manual, handbooks, and improvement plans, as well as interviews with district administrators and principals, there was no evidence that improving student achievement was the shared responsibility of the district, schools, students, parents, and the community. Schools provided students and parents updates on their progress on assessments such as the MCAS test. However, there was no organized initiative or program to ensure that all parties were responsible for working towards higher achievement for students.

3. The district has allocated sufficient instructional time in the core content areas to promote academic achievement and a level of proficiency for all students. Instructional time in each content area:
 - a. meets state requirements at each level, and
 - b. meets the educational needs of students as determined through an analysis of student achievement data.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The instructional schedules for the elementary schools met the state requirement of 900 hours. The regional high school met the 990-hour state requirement. The middle school was classified as an elementary school due to the fact that the district's Grade 5 students were placed there. As a result, its schedule was designed around the 900-hour requirement. However, the district planned to increase the schedule to meet the 990-hour requirement for middle schools.

Elementary school MCAS test results, particularly from Lakeville, indicated that instructional time in the core academic areas did not meet student needs. Lakeville's math proficiency index declined from 75.7 in 2000 to 66.3 in 2003, and its ELA proficiency index declined from 85.4 in 2000 to 75.7 in 2003. In Freetown, the ELA proficiency index was 75.5 in 2000 and 81.3 in 2003. Freetown's gains in math were minimal: the proficiency index was 70.0 in 2000 and 71.6 in 2003 (with a drop in scores in the years in between).

Student performance at the middle and high school levels was far superior to the elementary school performance. The ELA proficiency index of the middle and high schools together increased from 77.3 in 2000 to 88.1 in 2003. Their math proficiency index increased from 56.5 in 2000 to 71.5 in 2003. This was comparable to the state average.

4. The district employs highly qualified teachers, that are certified in the area(s) of their primary assignment or responsibility.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: According to district administrators, few of the staff members were not appropriately certified in the area of their primary responsibility. The certification survey provided by the district showed that none of the teachers had no certification at all, and that four teachers were certified but taught one or more periods per day out-of-field.

5. District employment policies and practices identify, and encourage skilled, highly qualified personnel to be appointed to and remain in the district's employ.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Interviews with district administrators and principals revealed that the rate of staff turnover was extremely low. Interviewees credited school culture and a generous benefits package, including 50% tuition reimbursement and a 90% contribution by the district to the cost of Healthcare Maintenance Organization (HMO) coverage.

At the end of 2003, all of the district's central office administration (superintendent, assistant superintendent for curriculum, director of special education, and business manager), as well as one of the four principals, left the district.

Standard 6. ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS: District and school policies and practices require all faculty, staff and students to be in attendance. Retention, suspension, transition management, and dropout prevention policies and programs encourage and support equitable participation in quality educational programs for all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- During the period under review, the district reduced exclusions at the middle school from 88 to 49, but exclusions at the high school increased.
- The district lacked formal, written policies and procedures for transition management and dropout prevention and intervention.

- Student handbooks clearly stated expectations for student behavior and consequences for infractions.

Indicators:

1. District and school policies and practices require all staff and students to be in attendance.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Principals indicated that staff and administrators followed the student handbooks' policies and practices on student attendance. At the elementary schools, the nurse contacted the parents of absent students. At the middle and high schools, guidance staff contacted parents.

The negotiated agreement between the teachers and the school committee specified the number of days allowed for illness, professional development, jury duty or military service, personal reasons, bereavement, religious reasons, and association purposes. There were no policies on intervention for or remediation of excessive staff absences.

2. The district has well-documented policies and practices that support equitable participation in quality educational programs for all students. The policies, procedures and practices address:
 - a. transition management,
 - b. dropout prevention.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: A document review indicated that, during the period under review, the district lacked a policy on transition, but interviewees were consistent in describing the district's practice. Principals indicated that the elementary schools had a transition process. Elementary students visited the middle school before becoming students there, and representatives, including teachers, from the middle school visited the elementary schools. The district had several pen pal programs. New parents were invited to tour the middle school.

Middle and high school guidance counselors met to ensure a seamless transition from one level to the next, and parents were invited to tour the high school and meet with teachers. The

vocational-technical and agriculture schools sent representatives to discuss course and program options with Grade 8 students.

Interviewees indicated that the district lacked formal dropout prevention and intervention programs. Interviewees stated that when student data indicated that it was appropriate, guidance staff referred students to the Apponequet Developmental Program or the Middleboro Evening School. The district also offered students a written description of the Vocational Life Skills Program and a handbook that focused on school-to-work initiatives.

3. The district has well-documented policies and practices that support equitable participation in quality educational programs for all students that address:
 - a. high expectations for all students,
 - b. participation in challenging courses,
 - c. support for students to remain in and succeed in quality programs, and
 - d. equitable participation in advanced and AP-type courses.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Student handbooks set high expectations for all students. The high school principal offered six advanced placement (AP) courses. Interviewees indicated that guidance counselors and teachers encouraged students to enroll in more challenging courses. Volunteer teachers tutored students and encouraged them to remain and succeed in challenging courses. Participation in higher-level and challenging courses increased in the past three years.

Challenging courses at the middle school were limited to math and foreign languages. At the time of the on-site review, the district tracked students, but interviewees indicated that the practice was under review. Interviewees indicated that at the two elementary schools, teachers provided individualized attention that, along with the Talents Limited program, focused on maximizing the potential of students.

Interviewees indicated that the central office administration exhibited its commitment to high expectations by implementing the NEASC accreditation standards district-wide. A rubric

established a foundation for the SIPs. The most recent NEASC accreditation report assigned the district a “warning” status, due mainly to budget conditions.

4. The district has well-documented policies and practices that respond to student behavior and support student needs in an equitable manner. The policies, procedures, and practices address issues in the areas of discipline, retention, suspension, and exclusion.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Principals indicated that each school published a student handbook that addressed discipline. Handbooks indicated that the schools immediately involved parents in the case of infractions. The district trained teachers in intervention strategies, and all four schools had building-based support teams.

Exclusion was not an issue at the elementary school level. At the middle school, interviews and documents indicated that intervention reduced the number of exclusions from 88 to 49 over a two-year period. Exclusions increased at the high school in the past three years. The high school used a Saturday detention program.

5. The district has policies and programs in place to address the needs of transient or mobile students. These policies, and programs promote transient student involvement in high quality and challenging programs.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Principals indicated that the transient and mobile student population was not an issue. During the period under review, approximately 90% of the student body remained with their schools. The two towns in the regional district had little, if any, rental property. There were few students in foster homes, and interviewees indicated that their effect on the schools was small. Since the transient and mobile population was not identified, practices and policies were not documented. Interviewees indicated that the needs of transient and mobile students were addressed individually.

6. The district has policies and practices that assign faculty to students and courses that maximize all faculty talents and skills and promote high levels of student achievement.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: A district administrator indicated that, at the time of the on-site review, all teachers were certified in their assigned disciplines. The teachers' contract allowed administrators to assign teachers as needed. An interview with the president of the teachers' union confirmed this practice. A review of student handbooks and discussions with district administrators indicated that the district conveyed and promoted the expectation that students would experience high levels of achievement.

Principals indicated that elementary school faculty, students, and parents were informed of high expectations for student work and achievement. The middle school principal indicated that tracking existed, and that focus groups served to decentralize instructional practices. The high school principal indicated that department heads were largely responsible for faculty course assignments and that teachers were expected teach a course that was new to them every two years.

Standard 7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING: The district has adopted and implemented a Professional Development Plan developed through the analyses of data for all administrators, teachers, and other professional staff, paraprofessionals and teacher assistants, and professional support teams.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The district's professional development plan was a collection of in-house and external workshops and courses, rather than a support system for a data-driven district strategic plan to improve student learning.
- During the period under review, the district's professional development was aligned with the district strategic plan and the SIPs, which were aligned with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) standards. The professional development plan lacked a connection with student assessment results.

- The district lacked a coherent, organized plan to connect the professional development dollars that were distributed in school, district, and grant budgets.
- The application and follow up processes for professional development lacked any measurable or observable means to determine effects on teaching and learning.

Indicators:

1. The district ensures that every school in the district has identified its professional development needs. The district has developed and implemented a professional development plan to address these identified needs for all:
 - a. principals,
 - b. teachers, and
 - c. other professional staff, including paraprofessionals and teacher assistants.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: During the period under review, a professional development council of administrators and teachers met regularly. Interviewees indicated that the council made decisions on many professional development issues and approved the district’s professional development plan.

Each school identified its own professional development needs, and they were published in the district professional development plan. Interviewees indicated that there were many conflicts around professional development issues, including the focus of offerings and the time scheduled for professional development activities. Principals approved individual professional development plans for teachers, but the teachers’ pursuit of professional development topics of their own interest conflicted with the needs of the schools and the district. The district professional development plan required only one full day in October and six half-days during the year, some of which were devoted to curriculum.

Teacher surveys and the advice of principals and curriculum leaders were included in the decision-making process. The district’s multi-level special education committee organized other on-site workshops and courses.

The principals, the director of instructional services, and, at the high school, the department heads approved teachers' applications to workshops. There was no coherent plan for offerings. Individual professional development plans were made at the building level and were not part of the district's professional development plan. There was no mandated professional development for paraprofessionals, but they were welcome to attend professional development activities.

2. The district updates its Professional Development Plan annually and sets forth a budget for professional development within the confines of the foundation budget.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Each May, the director of curriculum surveyed the staff about their professional development interests. The professional development plan for the year was updated each September.

There was a line item for professional development in the foundation budget. The director of instructional services had \$5,000.00 budgeted for district professional development in FY2004. Monies to support professional development were found in a number of budgets. Individual school budgets supported school-based professional development, district funds supported workshops, and university courses were partially funded by the district. Teachers paid for university courses beyond school or district requirements for re-certification. The professional development budget was \$239,283 in FY2001, \$308,562 in FY2002, and \$200,392 in FY2003.

3. The district's Professional Development program is informed by the following:
 - a. analysis of student assessment data disaggregated by student subgroup populations,
 - b. evaluation results of programs and services, and
 - c. evaluations of professional staff and administrators.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: Interviews and a document review indicated that the district had no significant student subgroups other than its special education population. There was evidence that the needs of the district's special education population informed the professional development plan. Interviewees

and documentation indicated that there was no purposeful evaluation of programs or services that drove professional development. Principals indicated in interviews that school-based professional development was, at least in part, influenced by the analysis of the MCAS test scores.

The EQA's review of administrators' and teachers' performance evaluations showed no apparent relationship to the creation of professional development offerings. Principals indicated that they used what they observed in classroom teaching as a basis for some school-based professional development.

Most of the school-based professional development offerings that appeared in the official district plan were stated as goals rather than specific workshops. The planned workshops did not systematically support those goals. Neither the district strategic plan nor the SIPs stated that evaluation data should inform professional development offerings.

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

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: A review of district records, and interviews with administrators, indicated that some planned course offerings were based on implementation of education reform. Principals indicated that they reached out to teachers to promote both participatory decision-making and community building.

The district distributed a survey each year to get input on its professional development plan. Teacher teams determined vertical articulation. The regional school's various school committees were briefed yearly about the MCAS test scores, and promoted improved and aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment through shared policies and approved motions. The

towns were included through the meetings and public communications of the four school committees, and through various newspapers.

5. The district's Professional Development Plan and programs include: data analysis skills for staff, accommodations for diverse styles of learning, and are aligned with the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan.

EQA Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: The only curriculum accommodation plan that the district presented was for the 2004-2005 school year. The district's professional development plan included offerings by the special education department and some training in data analysis, diverse learning styles, and inclusion strategies, but the courses offered were directed at special education teachers. Interviewees indicated that approximately two thirds of planned course offerings in the in-house professional development plan were cancelled due to low participation. There was no indication that professional development included training for regular education teachers in the skills and strategies needed to accommodate classroom instruction for regular education students.

6. Administrators and Teachers advance their knowledge and skills on a regular basis by enrolling in courses that are directly related to their professional assignments.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The professional development offerings were comprehensive and varied. There were adequate internal controls to ensure supervisory agreement with course participation. Supervisors had to approve all applications for professional development. However, there was no internal mechanism to track whether courses, workshops, and training sessions were directly related to current duties, or to advancement or career or assignment change. However, the variety of topics and the number of courses and workshops were sufficient to provide a balance between personal growth and the district's and schools' professional needs.

7. The district's Professional Development Plan is implemented to address and sustain the goals identified in the District Improvement Plan and individual School Improvement Plans.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: During the period under review, the district strategic plan (which functioned as its DIP) was largely used as a re-certification tool, since it and the SIPs were oriented toward NEASC accreditation standards. This resulted in professional development efforts that were more aligned with individual teacher interests than with needs identified by student assessment results. Individual professional development plans were site-based and balanced the school's needs for training with individual's needs for license renewal.

Domain C: Student Academic Support Services

Standards ▼ Indicators ►	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
<i>Domain C - Academic Support Services</i>									
S8 - Academic Support Services									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
Satisfactory	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	N/A	3
Poor	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	N/A	3
Unsatisfactory	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	1

Standard 8. STUDENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES: The district provides appropriate academic support services in ELA, math, and other core content areas for students that are not meeting state performance expectations. The district engages in a comprehensive analysis of the results from student performance assessments and student needs in order to determine the content and scope of academic support services that are offered.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- During the period under review, the district did not have a district curriculum accommodation plan (DCAP).
- During the period under review, the district’s strategic plan focused on meeting or exceeding the NEASC accreditation standards, which were based on the mission and philosophical beliefs of the district’s schools. The plan did not refer to the MCAS test or incorporate data - based, standards-driven strategies.

Indicators:

1. The district has adopted and is implementing a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP), which may be a component of the District Improvement Plan (DIP), to assist principals in ensuring that all efforts have been made to meet students’ needs in regular education.

EQA Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence: During the period under review, the district did not have a DCAP but operated under a document entitled *Freetown and Lakeville District Schools Strategic Planning Profile as a Corollary with the NEASC Accreditation Process*. From 2000 to 2003, the Freetown-Lakeville central administration strove to meet or exceed NEASC accreditation standards. The strategic

plan did not mention the MCAS test, except for a prescription that Pre-K-12 sequential curricula should meet or exceed the current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

In interviews, district principals indicated that they received the annual MCAS test results and reviewed them with their staff, particularly lead teachers at the elementary schools and department chairs at the high school. Interviewees indicated that, at the time of the review, there were no formal liaisons, such as team leaders, at the middle school to assist in this analysis. Data review informed changes to instructional programs. Uniformity was a challenge for the district, given the quasi-independence of its three constituent districts (two for the local elementary schools and one regional). The two elementary school principals communicated informally and frequently. They recently implemented a single revised report card for both elementary schools.

All district principals participated in a curriculum council that used assessment results to identify and recommend ways to improve student performance. The implementation of “Writing Across the Curriculum” at the high school, and the Links program at the elementary schools, resulted from their recommendations. However, principals indicated an almost exclusive reliance on individual staff, department heads, teacher assistance teams, building-based support teams, and guidance personnel to ensure that all efforts were made to meet individual student needs in regular education during the period under review.

In FY2004, the district had a DCAP, individualized by school, with goals, prescriptions for assistance to regular education teachers, classroom accommodation grids, lists of available support services, suggestions for collaborative efforts, and ways to promote parental involvement.

2. The district has a DCAP that is designed to assist the regular classroom teacher in:
 - a. analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all students in the regular classroom,
and
 - b. providing appropriate services and support within the regular education program.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district did not have a DCAP during the period under review but operated under a strategic plan based on NEASC accreditation standards. Principals indicated that there were support services, implemented by building-based support teams and based on the MCAS test data and classroom teacher observations, for accommodating regular education students' diverse learning styles.

At the high school, an adjustment counselor, guidance counselors, a social worker, a school psychologist, the MCAS test remediation programs, after-school academic support, and an NHS tutoring program supported regular education students.

At the middle school, support services included guidance counselors, an adjustment counselor, a speech therapist, a diagnostician, an MCAS test tutoring program, peer leaders, peer tutoring, skills classes, remedial reading, Title I, the MCAS math test tutors, and daily individual team time in the regular classroom.

At the elementary schools, support services included an adjustment counselor, guidance counselors, Title I reading and math, part-time tutors, and paraprofessional and parent volunteers who provided individualized instruction in the regular classroom.

The MCAS test summer programs at the middle and elementary schools were offered at the middle and high school. Regular classroom teachers' participation in participation in teacher assistance teams and building-based support teams helped them determine appropriate accommodations to meet individual student learning needs.

3. Components of the DCAP include the following:
 - a. direct and systematic instruction in reading;
 - b. provision of services to address the needs of students whose behavior may interfere with learning;
 - c. provisions encouraging teacher mentoring and collaboration and parental involvement; and
 - d. assistance to classroom teachers, such as professional development, to help them analyze and accommodate the needs of students.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district did not have a DCAP, and the strategic plan did not have all the component parts of a DCAP that would help teachers accommodate different learning styles in their classrooms. There was, however, systematic instruction in K-8 reading, and reading support at the high school, during the period under review. The elementary school principals collaborated to focus the district's direct instruction in reading on phonics and to ensure that their schools devoted equal time to reading instruction. Freetown implemented a Scott Foresman basal reader in grades K-4. At the middle school, each of the six core teaching teams had a developmental reading teacher, and Title I services were provided. At the high school, there was no formal reading program, but a teacher trained in the Wilson Reading program assisted special education students.

Teachers, counselors, resource-room teachers, administrators, and building-based support teams devised interventions for elementary school students whose behaviors interfered with learning. At the middle school, individual student needs were addressed through building-based support teams, teacher trainings, special-education resource-room pull-out programs, and an out-of-school suspension program. At the high school, an integrated development program was provided for approximately twenty students whose behaviors interfered with their learning. This program allowed students to remain in the school setting and continue to do required school assignments while addressing their individual behavioral issues.

Beginning in the winter of 2004, a consultant from Ribas Associates trained mentors before they were assigned mentees, who they guided and directed in defined areas. The district compensated

mentors with either a \$500.00 stipend or two in-service credits. Interviewees indicated that some of the first mentors did not share the discipline of their mentees, but assured the EQA that this issue was resolved. Interviewees indicated that, at the time of the review, each school had trained mentors for each grade level and discipline.

District principals indicated that parental involvement was very high during the period under review. Both elementary school principals indicated that parents were very involved and that parental interest was very high without being intrusive. Interviewees indicated that parental involvement was high at the middle school, particularly in attending celebrations, food and craft events, and in participating in the parent teacher organization (PTO). High school parents participated in the school council and attended cultural, arts, music, and sports events.

The district provided professional development opportunities during the period under review. Training for new staff, held at the beginning of the school year, was expanded from one to two days during the period under review. Teachers received a 50% tuition reimbursement, and in-service credits for a variety of experiences.

The director of instructional services coordinated each year's district-wide professional development offerings. Interviewees indicated that about two thirds of the offerings were cancelled due to low participation. They also indicated that there was no apparent common thread other than an attempt to meet multiple demands from across the district. Interviewees indicated that, at the time of the review, the district planned to make the offerings more coherent.

The professional development council, composed of teachers and the district's four principals, discussed the professional development needs identified at their schools and made recommendations to the director of instructional services.

There was some site-based professional development on data analysis. Site-based special-education workshops for regular-classroom teachers addressed accommodations for differing student learning styles. The leaders of these workshops reported back to the professional development council. Interviewees indicated that teachers' individual professional development

plans were site-based and not centrally coordinated. Principals indicated that they ensured alignment with re-certification requirements.

Interviewees indicated that professional development activities were determined separately from the district's strategic plan, and that district paraprofessionals did not participate in the district's professional development activities during the period under review, although this was planned for the future.

Interviewees indicated that in-service at the elementary schools focused on math. The district had designated staff trainers, used district-wide surveys to determine offerings, and conducted a formal needs assessment.

4. The district engages in a formal, comprehensive analysis of the results from student performance assessments and student needs to determine the content and scope of academic support services that are offered.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The MCAS tests were the district's only assessment tools during the period under review. The district did not formally and comprehensively analyze the results of student assessments during the period under review. The central administration compiled assessment results for the schools, which did most of the analysis.

Principals reviewed the assessment results and designed building-based approaches to improving student performance, but this effort was not district-wide. The director of instructional services helped the elementary schools with their independent data reviews.

The central administration prepared reports on the MCAS test results for the school committees. In interviews, principals indicated that they received the MCAS test results from the central administration and reviewed those results with their staffs. They determined support services and made the MCAS test plans of action based on the results. They presented their decisions to the individual school councils for endorsement and to the appropriate school committee for action.

5. Beginning at the Kindergarten level, the district uses data available from classroom teachers and standardized tests to*:
 - a. identify all students who are not meeting grade-level performance expectations; and
 - b. provide these students with sufficient supplementary and/or remedial services.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: Principals reviewed the MCAS assessment results with their staffs and identified students who did not meet grade-level performance expectations. Classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and, at the high school, department chairs provided low-performing students with appropriate supplementary and remedial services. Interviewees indicated that the district relied primarily on classroom teachers to identify students in need of additional services. These students were referred for additional testing, Title I services, 504 plans, tutorial services, and sometimes for special education services. The elementary schools introduced a standards-based report card in the academic year before the review.

Despite these efforts, Freetown Elementary School's math proficiency index only increased from 70.0 to 71.6 from 2000 to 2003, with a drop in scores in the years in between, and Assawompsett Elementary School's math and ELA proficiency indices both decreased over the same period (from 85.4 to 75.7 in ELA, and from 75.7 to 66.3 in math). Freetown Elementary's ELA proficiency index increased from 75.5 in 2000 to 81.3 in 2003.

6. Early intervention reading programs are provided at the primary level to ensure that by the end of Grade 3 students are reading at the Proficiency level on the MCAS test. *

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The Tier I data indicated that in 2003, 53.3% of Freetown Elementary School students and 56.3% of Assawompsett Elementary School students were proficient in reading at the end of Grade 3. The state average for that year was 63.1%.

Interviewees indicated that the district offered early-intervention programs in reading. The elementary schools increased time for reading instruction, placed greater emphasis on phonics,

and used Wilson Reading, Title I, and tutorial instruction. Classroom teachers monitored student progress and referred students to early-intervention programs.

7. The district develops Student Success Plans for all students who qualify for them, and the Plans contain the components required by statute.

* These indicators are not applicable to secondary and Vocational schools and districts.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Interviews and a document review indicated that all students who qualified for Individual Student Success Plans (ISSPs) had them, and that the plans contained the components required by statute. The MCAS test results were the primary means of determining whether a student qualified for an ISSP, and of determining the student's needs that would be addressed in the plan. The elementary school principals were responsible for monitoring and maintaining the ISSPs. At the middle and high schools, the principals and guidance counselors shared that responsibility. The high school gave the EQA a school-specific sample ISSP template. There was no district-wide standard template for ISSPs, and teachers were not formally trained to develop ISSPs.

Domain D: Leadership and Governance

Standards ▼ Indicators▶	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Domain D - Leadership, Governance, & Organization									
S9 - Organizational Leadership: Direction, Goal Setting, Policies & Planning									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Poor	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	6
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S10 - Organizational & Human Resource Management									
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfactory	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Poor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Standard 9. ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP: DIRECTION, GOAL SETTING, POLICIES AND PLANNING: The district and each of its schools and programs implement improvement plans that are based on the analysis of recent and long-range student performance data. The district provides and maintains thorough, complete, and informative documentation on past and current initiatives, practices, policies, procedures, and achievements of the district and its students. District leaders provide clear direction for student, school, and district performance. Implementation of improvement plans is consistently assessed and modified based on ongoing analyses of student achievement data.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The district’s strategic plan did not address the improvement of student achievement as measured by the MCAS test results.
- The school improvement plans (SIPs) were aligned with the strategic plan and did not focus on the improvement of student achievement as measured by the MCAS test results.
- The district had no local, district-wide, data-driven assessment tool to monitor student achievement.

- The superintendent's and the principals' annual evaluations did not use the improvement of student achievement as a measure of administrative performance.

Indicators:

1. The district provides and maintains thorough, complete, and informative documentation on past and current initiatives, practices, policies, procedures, and achievements of the district and its students. This documentation is accessible and well organized.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Central administration interviewees indicated that all records and data were maintained and housed in a vault at Apponequet Regional High School. All school records, data, and archival information for the regional district and its towns were stored in the vault.

The regional district employed clerical staff with specific responsibilities to the member towns. For example, the central office generated the warrant for the region's expenditures, as well as the warrants for the expenditures of the elementary schools, but it employed separate clerical staff to generate and process the approval of each town's warrant, file the warrant, and compile the town's invoices.

The district used a recently updated MASC policy manual. The regional school district and the town school committees officially adopted the entire policy manual. The policy manual addressed school committee operations, and student, budget, and personnel matters, but it had no policies on staff attendance, and several of the policies were generic. The collective bargaining agreement defined staff attendance benefits.

According to the new central administration, the archival records were well-maintained and provided information and data to ensure a smooth change in leadership. The archival records were readily accessible, and sensitive records were kept confidential.

According to the regional school contract, both town meetings must approve the school budget. In a recent budget dispute, Freetown did not approve the regional budget, forcing a public district meeting of voters from both towns. Interviewees indicated there were no district records on what

constituted a quorum at such a meeting, and the moderator declared that no quorum was required. Fewer than 100 people attended the meeting to approve the school budget.

2. The District Improvement Plan (DIP) incorporates the district's vision and mission statement, and the analysis of student achievement data drives the development, implementation, and modification of educational programs, services, and practices.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The EQA reviewed the district's NEASC-oriented strategic plan, which was a 1995 PowerPoint presentation of the vision and mission of the schools. Interviewees identified it as the DIP. Updates and amendments were added to the original document to produce the latest edition, 2000-2005. Interviewees and the document stated that the school committee, school councils, administrative councils, parent-teacher organizations, and community stakeholders all participated in the development of the plan.

The strategic plan had the following goal headings: organizational development, space and facilities, school climate, curriculum and instruction, and finance. Each heading listed several action statements. These goal headings and action statements were adopted in November 1996 as corollaries to the NEASC accreditation process. From 2000 to 2003, central administration focused on having all schools meet or exceed the NEASC accreditation standards. The strategic plan did not refer to the MCAS or any other district-wide assessment tool. Interviewees indicated that the central administration focused primarily on the space and facilities goal between 2000 and 2003. The development and implementation of sequential PreK-12 instructional curricula were priority goals under the heading of curriculum and instruction. The strategic plan indicated that the PreK-12 sequential curricula should meet or exceed the current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Aside from this reference, the strategic plan did not mention the MCAS test. An appendix to the strategic plan listed NEASC expectations, which were incorporated into the SIPs.

Regional school committee members described the development of the strategic plan as an intense and laborious task involving many stakeholders. When asked directly, all school committees identified the strategic plan and NEASC expectations as the DIP.

The strategic plan did not refer to the MCAS testing and results. The principals and the school committees stated that MCAS test results were presented and discussed annually, and spoke of changes and modifications to instructional programs based on the review of MCAS results. However, some interviewees' answers to the question "Did MCAS drive the development of and changes to the DIP?" were vague. Subsequent interviews indicated that classroom space and new facilities were the strategic plan's major priorities.

The current administration stated that the strategic plan was being revised to include the use of MCAS results. The district was developing training for teachers in the analysis and use of MCAS results. The current administration prioritized analysis and disaggregation of MCAS test results by school and by grade level.

3. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) for every school is aligned with the district's mission statement, and the analysis of student achievement data drives the development, implementation, and modification of educational programs, services, and practices.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The SIPs were not driven by an analysis of student achievement data, but neither were student performance and the resources needed to improve it ignored. Programs and instruction were modified during the period under review, but in-depth analysis of disaggregated the MCAS test data did not drive these initiatives.

The EQA examined the SIP for each school. Their mission and vision statements were written by the principals and school councils and were variations of the strategic plan, though each was unique to its school. School councils and other constituents were involved in the writing of other elements of the SIPs.

An appendix to the district's strategic plan listed the NEASC expectations. The NEASC accreditation standards were intended to improve the quality of instruction and establish standards for each school. Interviewees indicated that, during the period under review, the superintendent used the NEASC accreditation standards as the primary means of evaluating improvement, consistency, and uniformity among the schools. Since the MCAS test was the only assessment tool used grades K-12, principals used the MCAS test results as an informal measurement of student achievement on specific types of questions or content. Principals measured their schools' progress by comparing aggregate the MCAS test data by year. Only with the arrival of the region's newly hired administrators in July of 2003 did the elementary schools learn that poor student performance in a particular area of the MCAS test was the result of a misalignment between Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the local curriculum.

4. District leaders monitor student achievement data throughout the year, considering the goals identified in the DIP and individual SIPs and implements programs, policies, and services that are most likely to result in improved student achievement.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: MCAS testing was the district's primary assessment tool, but the MCAS test was not the district's top priority. Neither the district strategic plan nor the SIPs mentioned the analysis of the MCAS test results, indicating that the district's monitoring of student achievement was somewhat informal. According to professional staff and school committee members, the MCAS test results were presented annually at the schools and at public meetings, where they were compared to the previous year's results or to those of districts similar to Freetown-Lakeville. School committee members indicated that they were aware of the decline in scores. They indicated confidence that the new administration would address the decline and take action to improve future MCAS test scores. The school committees could not specify strategies that had been discussed for improving student achievement. The Freetown School Committee mentioned that certain textbooks and program modifications were considered.

Interviews and documentation established that the district's administrators, for the period under review, focused on finance and capital projects (i.e., new school facilities). There was no

ongoing monitoring of student achievement through formal local assessments because the MCAS test was the only district-wide K-12 assessment tool. (However, when asked what tools the district used to monitor student achievement, one school committee member stated that the MCAS tests were not the only ones.)

The new administration indicated that a change of direction and focus was necessary to make the analysis of the MCAS test results a top priority. The district planned for professional development to concentrate on the analysis and use of the MCAS test results. The district also planned to identify other assessment tools to monitor student achievement.

5. All of the district's administrators are appropriately certified.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The EQA's review of personnel files showed that all administrators were appropriately certified.

6. The leadership reports annually to the school committee, staff, and community concerning the extent to which the implementation of the DIP and SIPs have or have not resulted in improved student achievement.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school councils and the principals collaborated on the development and presentation of the SIPs. They presented revisions of the strategic plan and the SIPs to the public, school committees, and staff each year. The strategic plan and the SIPs described annual priorities for improvement, focusing on classroom space, finance, facilities, and school climate. They described instructional needs in terms of enrollment and the purchase of materials and supplies, rather than student achievement. The strategic plan and the SIPs were designed to improve student achievement through the NEASC accreditation standards.

In Freetown, the school committee reviewed and approved the SIP in the fall. In the region and in Lakeville, this happened in the spring. Freetown used the SIP in budget development. In

Lakeville and the region, the budget implications of SIP revisions were delayed by one fiscal year because of this timing.

7. The superintendent is evaluated annually on the district's state assessment results and implementation of the DIP. This performance evaluation serves as the basis for improving the future job performance of the superintendent.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The school committee evaluated the superintendent annually. The evaluation tool incorporated the "Principles of Effective Administration," but did not mention the strategic plan, student achievement, or the MCAS test results. The EQA team reviewed the evaluation items and found that they did not include measurable goals and objectives.

When the school committee members completed their evaluations, the forms were forwarded to a subcommittee of members from each of the three school committees, who compiled the evaluations and presented them to a joint meeting of all the school committees. The superintendent's salary and annual increases were not tied to the evaluation or to student achievement on the MCAS tests.

The EQA examined the superintendent's evaluations during the on-site visit. The superintendent received good ratings for each of the evaluation items and was lauded for his work with the school budget and facilities. Evaluators' suggestions for improvement of the superintendent's performance centered on better communications with town officials, constituents, and staff.

A new superintendent was hired, and school committee members indicated that they planned to implement a more goal-oriented approach to the evaluation. School committee members attended an evaluation workshop conducted by the MASC and returned with a sample copy of an evaluation tool used in another district, which they used to revise Freetown-Lakeville's procedures and practices for superintendent evaluation.

The new superintendent did not establish goals for his evaluation, though school committee members said that this should have been done. School committee members indicated that other pressing priorities consumed their time and energy at the time of the new superintendent's appointment. The school committees planned to develop goals for the next evaluation cycle.

8. Principals are evaluated annually on school state assessment results and the implementation of their respective SIPs. These performance evaluations serve as the basis for improving future job performance of the principals.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The EQA found no direct evidence that the principals' evaluations were based on state assessment results or the SIPs. The stated purposes of the evaluation instrument's performance standards were to: provide feedback for the individual; assure periodic communication between the individual and his or her supervisor; provide a basis for comparison of the individual's performance over time; support professional growth and development; provide opportunities for professionals to talk about their craft; be a motivational tool; and reflect the district's philosophy of education. The performance standards, which were the main focus of the evaluations, did not mention student achievement or the MCAS test results. Evaluation sessions addressed the SIPs in relation to the goals of the strategic plan for 2000-2005, which did not list the assessment of student achievement as a goal.

The superintendent evaluated principals annually. The EQA examined the evaluations and found that they were completed promptly. A written agreement with administrators (excluding principals) stated that management personnel (including principals) would be evaluated consistent with the provisions of the Educational Reform Act of 1993. The agreement identified the evaluation instrument, which the school committees adopted in November 1996. Possible ratings on the evaluation tool's items were 'Exceeds Expectations,' 'Meets Expectations,' and 'Does Not Meet Expectations.'

Standard 10. ORGANIZATIONAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: The district has organizational structures, policies, collective bargaining agreements, procedures, and

practices with clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability. Teacher retention/turnover rates are within reason. Together, these elements promote efficient and effective district operation and facilitate achievement for all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The Freetown-Lakeville district was served by four legal entities established by the Massachusetts General Laws.
- In the district, the superintendent of schools served four school committees.
- The school facilities provided a stimulating learning environment.

Indicators:

1. The superintendent, in regular meetings with administrators and members of the school committee, develops a coherent vision or mission statement and DIP designed to achieve it.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The superintendent, school committees, and administrators developed a district strategic plan, which they identified as the DIP. The document, adopted in November 1996, listed five categories of goals: organization and development; space and facilities; school climate; curriculum and instruction; and finance. There were action statements for each category.

Interviewees described the development of the strategic plan as intense, time-consuming, and laborious. However, all parties viewed the completed document as relevant to the needs of the Freetown-Lakeville schools.

Interviewees indicated that the strategic plan was revised each year. The latest edition of the strategic plan had an implementation period of 2000-2005.

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

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The Freetown-Lakeville schools formed a unique regional school district served by four school committees: Superintendent Union #34; the Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Committee; the Freetown School Committee; and the Lakeville School Committee. The Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Committee had six members, two elected by each town and one each appointed by the Freetown School Committee and the Lakeville School Committee. Superintendent Union #34 had six members, three each appointed by the Freetown School Committee and the Lakeville School Committee. The Lakeville School Committee had five locally-elected members. The Freetown School Committee had three locally-elected members during the period under review. It added two more members in 2004.

Superintendent Union #34 was responsible for hiring and dismissing the superintendent and for all operations that affected all town and regional schools. The Regional School Committee served the regional schools (grades 5-12). The Freetown School Committee and the Lakeville School Committee served their respective town schools (grades Pre-K-4, though the Pre-K program for both communities was housed at Freetown Elementary).

The superintendent was the chief executive and administrator of all the schools and school committees. During the period under review, the superintendent was completely in charge of all operations related to all of the district's schools. The district's structure and the superintendent's focus on political issues, capital projects, and finance led him to delegate responsibilities to principals and directors.

The superintendent delegated responsibility for instruction and student achievement to each principal. It was in this capacity that principals used the MCAS test results as a gross measurement of the school's progress from year to year, and reported on this annual progress to their respective school committees. The superintendent supported and encouraged this process. The superintendent also delegated responsibility to the director of instructional services to work

with the principals on instruction and student performance. The principals of the town schools enjoyed a degree of independence in establishing relationships with parents and town officials.

The superintendent maintained tight reins on the school facilities, capital projects, and all aspects of the school budgets, but he allowed town principals some independence in developing their school budgets. The finance and school committees of each town influenced the finances, particularly with regard to personnel, of their respective schools. Other directors in the areas of business and facilities management reported to the superintendent on the daily operations of these departments. The superintendent's management of both areas was hands-on.

3. The district leaders ensure that:
 - a. all principals are aware of and understand published policies and district improvement plans; and
 - b. the district uses system-wide and intra-district communication systems to keep all faculty and staff well informed and to provide avenues for response.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The administrative structure was very lean. In a district with an enrollment of 3,056, the key administrators were the superintendent, the four school principals, the director of instruction, and the director of business. Frequent and regular meetings of the key administration facilitated district-wide communication. Principals communicated the messages of these meetings to staff, school councils, and parents. The superintendent communicated with the public through the local weekly newspaper and a district publication, *School Talk*.

The district maintained an active website and building-based newspapers to communicate with parents, the public, and the school committees. Two regional newspapers, the *New Bedford Standard Times* and the *Fall River Herald News*, had limited coverage of the Freetown schools

and the Freetown-Lakeville Regional District. The weekly newspaper and the *Brockton Enterprise* had similar coverage of the Lakeville schools and the district.

4. The district publishes a current organizational chart that indicates clear lines of responsibility. Job descriptions for all personnel on the organizational chart are current, published and available to all faculty and staff.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district gave the EQA an updated organizational chart, which identified key administrative positions and the chain of command for the regional district and the town schools. The EQA found job descriptions on file for all positions listed on the organizational chart.

5. The district has a process for the recruitment and hiring of staff that involves appropriate administrative and staff participation. The process is perceived as fair and open and focuses on identifying and acquiring the most qualified individuals for each position.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Interviewees indicated that Bridgewater State College was the main source of prospective candidates for professional vacancies. They also mentioned Stonehill College and Providence College.

The schools advertised vacancies in the *Boston Globe* but relied more heavily on the local weekly and regional daily newspapers, including the *New Bedford Standard Times* and the *Brockton Enterprise*. School administrators also attended job fairs in Boston and at regional colleges to seek candidates.

Screening committees composed of teachers and other personnel interviewed candidates. The composition of screening committees varied with the nature of the position to be filled. The

principal hired staff with the approval of the superintendent. Interviewees indicated that the principals had some latitude in the selection and employment of staff.

The recruitment and hiring of staff was generally fair and open, but an interviewee gave some isolated examples of local influence in the filling of some positions. At least one appointee to the regional district staff held office in one of the local towns. According to the interviewee, the appointee served credibly in the position. The interviewee indicated that this and the other incidents did not have a serious negative effect on the employment of qualified staff.

6. The district ensures that all personnel records are carefully compiled, maintained, and available to all appropriate faculty and staff.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: All personnel records were stored in the office of the superintendent. The director of instructional services compiled and maintained all personnel files. The superintendent and the director of instructional services had access to all personnel files. Individuals could request access to their own files through the secretary in the office of the director of instructional services. Principals had access to the files of staff assigned to their schools and could request access to the files of those requesting transfers to their schools.

There were safeguards to secure the files and ensure the confidentiality of the records. The EQA viewed a sample of the files and found them complete, well-maintained, and in excellent order, with all data readily available.

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

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district assigned mentors to all new hires. Interviewees indicated that when the mentor program was new, some mentors did not share the discipline of their mentees. For example, one art teacher was assigned to mentor a classroom teacher. The district assured the EQA that this was no longer a problem.

At the time of the review, each school had trained mentors for each grade level and discipline. There were eleven at the high school, seventeen at the middle school, seven at Assawompsett Elementary, and eleven at Freetown Elementary. The high school and middle school had building coordinators for the program.

Mentors received training prior to assignment. According to a memo submitted to the EQA, a consultant from Ribas Associates conducted two full-day mentoring workshops for twenty teachers on February 11 and 25, 2004, at the high school. Feedback on the training indicated its effectiveness for, value to, and acceptance by the new mentors.

Mentors had their choice of compensation: a \$500.00 stipend or two in-service credits. The director of instructional services selected teachers for mentor training.

Mentors helped mentees develop classroom routines during their first days at school, overcome isolation, and find opportunities to interact with colleagues. They also helped with instructional planning and methods, organizational questions, policies, safety protocols, evaluation, accessing district and school resources and supplies, managerial strategies (including class management, relevant school policy, and legal matters), time management, and expectations for communicating with parents.

8. The district routinely recognizes the accomplishments of its professional and support staff and has low rates of employee turnover, especially among qualified staff with professional status.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: According principals and administrators, teacher turnover was not a problem. Few, if any, teachers left for other districts. Most of those who left did so for personal or family reasons or retirement. There were many retirements scheduled for the near future, but the filling of most vacancies for basic instructional programs was not a problem for the district. The areas in which it was hardest to fill vacancies were math, French, some of the sciences, and some areas of special education (i.e., industrial technology).

The district formally recognized retirees. The district also recognized exemplary service at school committee meetings and in *School Talk*, a district publication.

Domain E: Business and Financial Management

Standards ▼	Indicators▶	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
<i>Domain E - Business & Financial Management</i>												
S11 - Budget Planning & Development												
	Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Satisfactory	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	7
	Poor	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
	Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S12 - Financial & Capital Asset Management												
	Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
	Satisfactory	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	7
	Poor	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Standard 11. BUDGET PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT: The district has a budget preparation and development process that ensures full consideration and effective use of available resources essential for district and school operations focused on student achievement. The school committee, superintendent, administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and members of the community meet their responsibility to ensure that the school budget and appropriation meet the educational and achievement needs of all students.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The complexity of the district required the development and monitoring of three distinct budgets overseen by four school committees.
- There was no connection between budget decisions and student achievement.

Indicators:

1. There are clear, well-documented procedures for the development of the district’s budget to ensure input from all staff.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: Each town’s school budget was developed in line with other municipal departments and was approved at an annual town meeting. Each town provided its school committee and the district with an annual guideline, reflecting the economic situation of the town, for

developing the school budget. Principals justified new programs in their schools. School budget proposals began with a focus on the SIPs and the superintendent's priorities, but were ultimately based on available revenue. Each town had its own practices for developing revenue estimates.

Sections DA-DN of the school committee's policy manual described district-wide financial policies. The district's budget was a statement of the financial requirements of the middle and high schools. Its presentation and style were similar to those of the two municipal budgets. A subcommittee, consisting of representatives from the member communities, examined the economic situation of the district and its towns to determine the percentage increase in its collective assessment, on which the superintendent would base budget growth. The assessment of each town was based on the number students in the town. Lakeville represents approximately 54% of the district, and Freetown 46%.

Following public hearings, the superintendent provided budget recommendations to the school committees. Budget approval depended on the vote of both town meetings. During the period under review, each town approved the district budget. However, Freetown did not approve the district budget in FY2004, and a joint town meeting had to be called. Interviewees indicated that it was the first time this happened in over a dozen years.

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

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: District principals were responsible for monitoring student achievement. District interviewees reported that the district did not ignore the MCAS test results, but that the district paid greater attention to completing the NEASC accreditation process. The budget document did not systematically incorporate recommendations for improvement based on analysis of student achievement. District interviewees confirmed this observation.

3. The district's budget process is clear and well-documented and integrates district and school improvement plans, long-term goals, and action plans.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The budget process was clear and concise. The superintendent and the district school committee developed the district's yearly budget priorities. The SIPs framed budgetary prioritization and decision-making. The superintendent's recommended budget took into account the towns' revenue estimates. School committee minutes showed discussion of budget priorities and reductions. The school committee policy manual gave overall guidelines for the budget document and listed historical school expenditures. The budget that the school committee adopted was presented to the finance committee, at the town meetings, and at the district's public budget hearing.

4. The district allocates its resources to accomplish targeted initiatives and objectives at the district and school levels to improve student achievement for all student populations.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district reviewed its programs with regard to its annual goals and, to a lesser degree, to determine their cost-effectiveness. The district's budget documents consistently addressed SIP goals and initiatives. One of the district's spending priorities was maintaining class size at 20 to 25. Principals were the key advocates for budget decisions and adjustments. During the period under review, the principals performed any review of MCAS results, and were the conduits for budget adjustments.

The district exceeded its required spending for professional development in FY2000 (\$239,283 actual, \$130,950 required, for a \$108,333 surplus) and FY2001 (\$308,562 actual, \$176,700 required, for a surplus \$131,862). In FY2002, the spending fell short by \$20,858 (\$200,392 actual, \$221,250 required).

The towns supported the elementary schools with the resources they believed they could afford. Annual budget adjustments (increases or decreases) differed according to revenue available.

The district received between \$500,000 and \$600,000 in federal and state grant funding for academic programs throughout the district. The district provided the EQA with a history of its per-pupil expenditures. Freetown's per-pupil expenditure was \$7,171 in FY2003, Lakeville's was \$5,720, and at the regional schools, it was \$7,911. The state average was \$8,277.

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

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: There was no formal cost-benefit analysis program, but the district informally reviewed the performance and value of various programs, and made financial adjustments to its budget based on that analysis.

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

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district's budget document was clear and understandable, and provided histories of spending and enrollment. There was no narrative in the budget document, but rather traditional, line-item spreadsheets. The district increased its use of financial data and statistics for in-depth analysis of spending.

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

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: District interviewees stated that materials and supplies, and the funds budgeted for them, were adequate to educate district students, though reductions were made in FY2004. The district's professional development spending exceeded the required amounts in FY2000 and FY2001, though it did not meet the requirement in FY2002. The district was committed to maintaining low class size, and hired and retained sufficient staff to meet that goal. The

district's instructional and educational support staff members were sufficient, in keeping with the district's goals. The district employed few administrators and struggled to conduct all administrative tasks (such as evaluation, discipline, and general building support) effectively. The district focused on its buildings and infrastructure during the period under review. There was considerable local support for funding the construction and renovation of the district's buildings.

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

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district's towns provided financial support for its schools. During the period under review, the district and Lakeville exceeded their requirements for net school spending. Freetown did not provide net school spending during one of the years under review, but the problem was resolved. Each town provided additional revenue through debt exclusion votes for building at the local and regional level. Community and civic groups used the district's buildings and facilities regularly and frequently. The district took pride in its buildings and facilities.

9. Financial and audit reports are prepared and submitted in a timely manner to appropriate agencies.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The school committees and principals received monthly reports on the spending of their school and/or the district. The district treasurer oversaw the district's funds. The existence of the position also permitted a segregation of duties of district financial management systems. During the period under review, the district usually submitted an extension request on its required financial reports to the DOE, but otherwise filed them promptly. However, the district submitted its FY2003 end-of-year report late, due to staff turnover. The district and Freetown had a written agreement on the town's method of calculating indirect costs. There was a draft agreement between Lakeville and the district, but it was not yet in force.

10. Decisions resulting in changes in budget appropriations are made based on the analysis of student data to maximize the opportunities for the achievement of all students.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The district's budget development process does not provide an opportunity for budget adjustments based on a review of student achievement. There was no systematic connection between student achievement and changes to budget appropriation. Positive annual budget growth was the norm during the period under review. However, the local assessments were level in FY2004, requiring adjustments in program spending, particularly in the areas of fixed costs.

Standard 12. FINANCIAL AND CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT: The district maintains adequate accounting and financial reporting procedures. This is done to: inform district-level and school-level decision-makers; to ensure effective and efficient managerial control over the use of all funds; to acquire and efficiently manage supplemental funding; and to promote student achievement and accountability to the public. The condition, management, and maintenance of facilities encourage public support for education and are conducive to promoting high levels of student achievement.

Preliminary Finding(s):

- The district's commitment to long-term facility planning was comprehensive.
- The towns' support of the district's educational facilities was notable.

Indicators:

1. School committee policies and administrative procedures are clear regarding the processes and expectations for expenditures, transfers, and investment of funds with the district's budget and the expenditure of any district funds.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district had an internally developed accounting system. District policy DBJ governed procedures for budgetary transfers. Documentation and interviews indicated that the district school committee routinely, on the recommendations of the business manager, made the transfers necessary to ensure that spending was monitored and controlled throughout the fiscal year. Unibank Financial Services managed the district's funds. The district treasurer provided another level of oversight of the regional district's budget.

2. Regular, timely, accurate, and complete financial reports are made to the school committee and the public.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district gave monthly financial reports to the school committee. Reports covered the operational budget, capital, and grants. Principals received monthly reports on building-level spending. The school committee held a public hearing on its proposed annual budget. The appropriate school committee regularly and routinely signed warrants.

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

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: During the period under review, the district usually submitted an extension request on its required financial reports to the DOE, but otherwise filed them promptly. However, the district submitted its FY2003 end-of-year report late, due to staff turnover. The district completed and submitted to the appropriate agencies required financial reports on grant spending.

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

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district used locally developed financial-management software that it adopted eight years ago. District personnel reported the system to be robust, accommodating, and effective. During the period under review, template reports were consistently provided to the school committee and principals. The district's established policies and procedures to control spending ensured that expenditures were monitored, tracked, and documented. Three distinct budgets were developed and monitored. According to district and municipal officials, the superintendent during the period under review closely monitored budgets and spending to ensure accuracy and efficiency.

5. The district reviews student achievement data and the reviews are reflected in its financial decisions.

EQA Rating: Poor

Evidence: The district invested considerable time and resources in attaining NEASC accreditation. The use of analysis of the MCAS test results to inform budget revisions was secondary. The review of the MCAS test results was building-level, and it was unclear whether this analysis included disaggregated data. The school committee and principals indicated there were some changes to the budgetary appropriations during the year in response to the MCAS test results.

6. The district regularly employs:
- a. certified business officials,
 - b. purchasing agents with MCPPO credentials,
 - c. appropriate independent financial auditing services and implements their recommendations to ensure efficient and quality financial systems.
 - d. Objective and independent treasurers and auditor.*

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The current business manager, hired in September 2003, was appropriately certified. The previous business manager held the position for five years. The district followed a request for proposal (RFP) process for goods and services in excess of required thresholds, and followed Ch.30b for the procurement of services. School committee policy prescribed annual independent audits of the district's systems and controls. Thevenin, O'Leary, and Co., LLP of Brockton performed these. R.E. Brown of Mendon performed the Town of Lakeville audit, and Cicoria and Company performed the audit for the Town of Freetown.

7. The district uses reliable forecast mechanisms and control procedures to ensure that spending is within fiscal budget limits.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district examined and agreed upon available revenue with the towns' boards of selectmen and finance committees. There was support of the district's schools at all levels, with greater emphasis on local (Pre-K-4) school needs. The business manager, district treasurer, and independent auditors oversaw the controls to that ensure spending was within fiscal limits. During the period under review, the superintendent made certain that spending was controlled and within appropriation spending limits.

8. The district has a system in place to:
- a. ensure that that state bidding laws are followed;
 - b. monitor special revenue funds, revolving accounts, and fee structures related to them to ensure that they are well-managed and efficiently used;
 - c. monitor and track instructional assets such as texts, materials, supplies, and equipment to ensure efficient and maximum utilization; and
 - d. track its assets in accordance with GASB No.34.

EQA Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence: The district's business manager served as procurement officer for the district and monitored the district's capacity to adhere to bidding and procurement requirements. The district worked with the towns and its auditor to ensure it was in compliance with GASB No. 34. The

assistant superintendent received and tracked grant funds. The district did not charge fees for any of its services or programs. The district had revolving accounts for its food service and community recreation programs.

9. The district implements preventive maintenance programs for buildings and equipment that are reviewed on a regular basis and are related to the district's long-term capital needs.

EQA Rating: Excellent

Evidence: The district's policy manual addressed facility planning and development in section F. The district's maintenance and capital-program needs were dealt with similarly to its operational budget. Municipal capital improvement plans and town meeting warrant articles addressed the district's elementary-school capital needs. The district planned to absorb the middle and high schools' maintenance and capital needs into the district's operating budget. The district had a long-range educational facilities plan that articulated the district's facility planning priorities, processes, and activities. It had a central facility maintenance department.

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

* This portion of indicator 12-6 is applied to regional academic and vocational school districts.

EQA Rating: Excellent

Evidence: The facilities were clean, bright, spacious, well-maintained, and vibrant. Classrooms and assembly areas were appropriately furnished. The district's emphasis on improving and renovating existing facilities, and constructing new facilities, was exemplary. The two elementary schools were outstanding and were points of pride not only for the district but also for the towns. The district's long-range facilities plan and its ability to implement its goals was meritorious, as evidenced by the \$12.5 million high school construction and renovation completed in 2000. The \$24.5 million middle school construction project opened in 2003. The \$9.5 million Freetown Elementary School renovation and construction project was completed in 2000. The intermediate school (formerly the middle school), was scheduled to open following renovation in fall of 2004. An override vote was needed in Lakeville to provide operational funds to open the facility in September.

Appendix A: Proficiency Index

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix B: Freetown's Chapter 70 Funding and NSS FY1993-2003

FY	Foundation	Pct	Foundation	Pct	Required	Chapter 70	Pct	Required	Pct	Actual	Pct	Dollars	Pct
	Enrollment	Chg	Budget	Chg	Local	Aid	Chg	Net School	Chg	Net School	Chg	Over/Under	Over/
					Contribution			Spending (NSS)		Spending		Requirement	Under
FY93	575		2,885,078		1,853,010	463,093		2,316,103		2,316,103			
FY94	556	-3.3	2,754,978	-4.5	1,974,062	532,263	14.9	2,506,325	8.2	2,448,864	5.7	-57,461	-2.3
FY95	542	-2.5	2,800,859	1.7	2,081,397	586,864	10.3	2,668,261	6.5	2,775,562	13.3	107,301	4
FY96	541	-0.2	2,899,552	3.5	2,129,002	649,501	10.7	2,778,503	4.1	2,948,934	6.2	170,431	6.1
FY97	554	2.4	3,015,797	4	2,351,640	692,137	6.6	3,043,777	9.5	3,121,914	5.9	78,137	2.6
FY98	569	2.7	3,200,866	6.1	2,539,550	733,726	6	3,273,276	7.5	3,282,806	5.2	9,530	0.3
FY99	555	-2.5	3,267,055	2.1	2,638,262	789,226	7.6	3,427,488	4.7	3,513,845	7	86,357	2.5
FY00	567	2.2	3,353,049	2.6	2,927,401	874,276	10.8	3,801,677	10.9	3,904,988	11.1	103,311	2.7
FY01	546	-3.7	3,399,895	1.4	3,156,454	969,826	10.9	4,126,280	8.5	3,904,145	0	-222,135	-5.4
FY02	519	-4.9	3,475,914	2.2	3,664,363	1,115,300	15	4,779,663	15.8	4,410,245	13	-369,418	-7.7
FY03	542	4.4	3,740,017	7.6	3,892,548	1,031,241	-7.5	4,923,789	3	4,707,019	6.7	-216,770	-4.4

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FY	Dollars per Foundation Enrollment			Percentage of Foundation			Pct of Actual NSS
	Fnd Budget	Ch 70 Aid	Actual NSS	Ch 70	Required NSS	Actual NSS	
FY93	5,018	805	4,028	16.1	80.3	80.3	20
FY94	4,955	957	4,404	19.3	91	88.9	21.7
FY95	5,168	1,083	5,121	21	95.3	99.1	21.1
FY96	5,360	1,201	5,451	22.4	95.8	101.7	22
FY97	5,444	1,249	5,635	23	100.9	103.5	22.2
FY98	5,625	1,290	5,769	22.9	102.3	102.6	22.4
FY99	5,887	1,422	6,331	24.2	104.9	107.6	22.5
FY00	5,914	1,542	6,887	26.1	113.4	116.5	22.4
FY01	6,227	1,776	7,150	28.5	121.4	114.8	24.8
FY02	6,697	2,149	8,498	32.1	137.5	126.9	25.3
FY03	6,900	1,903	8,685	27.6	131.7	125.9	21.9

Appendix C: Lakeville's Chapter 70 Funding and NSS FY1993-2003

FY	Foundation	Pct	Foundation	Pct	Required	Chapter 70	Pct	Required	Pct	Actual	Pct	Dollars	Pct
	Enrollment	Chg	Budget	Chg	Local	Aid	Chg	Net School	Chg	Net School	Chg	Over/Under	Over/
					Contribution			Spending (NSS)		Spending		Requirement	Under
FY93	542		2,754,598		1,467,746	494,228		1,961,974		1,961,974			
FY94	549	1.3	2,738,699	-0.6	1,591,125	642,091	29.9	2,233,216	13.8	2,261,606	15.3	28,390	1.3
FY95	570	3.8	2,953,373	7.8	1,651,110	761,891	18.7	2,413,001	8.1	2,524,129	11.6	111,128	4.6
FY96	585	2.6	3,111,843	5.4	1,576,088	947,845	24.4	2,523,933	4.6	2,649,385	5	125,452	5
FY97	611	4.4	3,317,353	6.6	1,629,064	1,126,271	18.8	2,755,335	9.2	2,839,530	7.2	84,195	3.1
FY98	599	-2	3,326,267	0.3	1,669,847	1,215,878	8	2,885,725	4.7	2,954,473	4	68,748	2.4
FY99	645	7.7	3,487,390	4.8	1,687,597	1,797,500	47.8	3,485,097	20.8	3,304,547	11.8	-180,550	-5.2
FY00	642	-0.5	3,476,160	-0.3	2,091,519	1,784,910	-0.7	3,876,429	11.2	3,716,597	12.5	-159,832	-4.1
FY01	647	0.8	3,658,369	5.2	2,136,336	1,910,725	7	4,047,061	4.4	3,880,147	4.4	-166,914	-4.1
FY02	632	-2.3	3,787,869	3.5	2,237,701	1,943,979	1.7	4,181,680	3.3	4,048,432	4.3	-133,248	-3.2
FY03	645	2.1	3,992,026	5.4	2,302,012	1,943,979	0	4,245,991	1.5	4,189,758	3.5	-56,233	-1.3

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FY	Dollars per Foundation Enrollment			Percentage of Foundation			Pct of Actual NSS
	Fnd Budget	Ch 70 Aid	Actual NSS	Ch 70	Required NSS	Actual NSS	
FY93	5,082	912	3,620	17.9	71.2	71.2	25.2
FY94	4,989	1,170	4,120	23.4	81.5	82.6	28.4
FY95	5,181	1,337	4,428	25.8	81.7	85.5	30.2
FY96	5,319	1,620	4,529	30.5	81.1	85.1	35.8
FY97	5,429	1,843	4,647	34	83.1	85.6	39.7
FY98	5,553	2,030	4,932	36.6	86.8	88.8	41.2
FY99	5,407	2,787	5,123	51.5	99.9	94.8	54.4
FY00	5,415	2,780	5,789	51.3	111.5	106.9	48
FY01	5,654	2,953	5,997	52.2	110.6	106.1	49.2
FY02	5,993	3,076	6,406	51.3	110.4	106.9	48
FY03	6,189	3,014	6,496	48.7	106.4	105	46.4

Appendix D: Freetown-Lakeville's Chapter 70 Funding and NSS FY1993-2003

FY	Foundation	Pct	Foundation	Pct	Required	Chapter 70	Pct	Required	Pct	Actual	Pct	Dollars	Pct	
	Enrollment	Chg	Budget	Chg	Local	Aid	Chg	Net School	Chg	Net School	Chg	Over/Under	Over/	
					Contribution			Spending (NSS)			Spending		Requirement Under	
FY93	1,747		8,659,835		4,133,794	3,462,472		7,596,266		7,596,266				
FY94	1,734	-0.7	8,594,210	-0.8	4,251,374	3,620,487	4.6	7,871,861	3.6	7,657,286	0.8	-214,575	-2.7	
FY95	1,753	1.1	8,850,100	3	4,451,377	3,862,370	6.7	8,313,747	5.6	8,535,256	11.5	221,509	2.7	
FY96	1,737	-0.9	8,955,673	1.2	4,258,744	4,034,209	4.4	8,292,953	-0.3	8,499,645	-0.4	206,692	2.5	
FY97	1,717	-1.2	9,043,863	1	4,385,879	4,233,739	4.9	8,619,618	3.9	9,050,869	6.5	431,251	5	
FY98	1,724	0.4	9,230,810	2.1	4,619,502	4,432,109	4.7	9,051,611	5	9,724,898	7.4	673,287	7.4	
FY99	1,715	-0.5	9,567,807	3.7	4,986,424	4,672,586	5.4	9,659,010	6.7	10,291,115	5.8	632,105	6.5	
FY00	1,746	1.8	9,787,766	2.3	5,123,398	4,934,486	5.6	10,057,884	4.1	11,015,928	7	958,044	9.5	
FY01	1,767	1.2	10,416,561	6.4	5,134,900	5,298,861	7.4	10,433,761	3.7	11,813,279	7.2	1,379,518	13.2	
FY02	1,770	0.2	11,137,843	6.9	5,632,773	5,567,682	5.1	11,200,455	7.3	12,656,873	7.1	1,456,418	13	
FY03	1,808	2.1	11,756,385	5.6	5,927,466	5,828,919	4.7	11,756,385	5	13,395,213	5.8	1,638,828	13.9	

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FY	Dollars per Foundation Enrollment			Percentage of Foundation			Pct of Actual NSS
	Fnd Budget	Ch 70 Aid	Actual NSS	Ch 70	Required NSS	Actual NSS	
FY93	4,957	1,982	4,348	40	87.7	87.7	45.6
FY94	4,956	2,088	4,416	42.1	91.6	89.1	47.3
FY95	5,049	2,203	4,869	43.6	93.9	96.4	45.3
FY96	5,156	2,323	4,893	45	92.6	94.9	47.5
FY97	5,267	2,466	5,271	46.8	95.3	100.1	46.8
FY98	5,354	2,571	5,641	48	98.1	105.4	45.6
FY99	5,579	2,725	6,001	48.8	101	107.6	45.4
FY00	5,606	2,826	6,309	50.4	102.8	112.5	44.8
FY01	5,895	2,999	6,686	50.9	100.2	113.4	44.9
FY02	6,293	3,146	7,151	50	100.6	113.6	44
FY03	6,502	3,224	7,409	49.6	100	113.9	43.5