District Review Report

Newburyport Public Schools

Targeted Review conducted January 7–9, 2019

Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Organization of this Report

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Executive Summary

The district welcomed a new superintendent and a new high-school principal for the 2018–2019 school year. An assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, a business and human resources liaison, and a student services director complete the superintendent's cabinet. Stakeholders told the review team that these leaders were developing a culture of improved collaboration and trust among staff and the wider community.

The district has four schools. The Bresnahan School, which serves pre-kindergarten through grade 3, was built in 2015. The Molin Upper Elementary (grades 4–5) and the Nock Middle School (grades 6–8), which are housed in one complex, share an auditorium, gymnasium, cafeteria, and library. Newburyport High School (grades 9–12), which was established in 1831, is one of the oldest high schools in the United States. Newburyport is proud of its history and its schools reflect the city's ties to the sea and sailing history, with nautical themes in the interior design of the Bresnahan School, and historical artifacts in the main entrance to the high school.

A long-term Strategic Plan 2016–2021, developed under the previous superintendent, guides the district. This document, with mission, core beliefs, objectives, and seven main strategies continues to guide the new superintendent who has generated related 2018–2019 district goals. While comprehensive, the strategic plan and School Improvement Plans do not contain measurable objectives that would enable the district to monitor its school improvement work.

Although the district has some curriculum coordination at the Pre-K–8 level, there are few structures to ensure cohesive Pre-K–12 curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. The assistant superintendent is responsible for the district's curriculum, instruction, and assessment; one Pre-K–8 literacy and one Pre-K–8 math/science coordinator assist the assistant superintendent. The high school does not have curriculum coordinators, content specialists, or department chairs. While there had been curriculum teacher leader positions at the middle and high-school levels, the positions were redefined; at the time of the onsite in January 2019, newer equivalent positions remained vacant.

While the district uses a wide range of assessments to identify students in need of individual academic supports, it does not use data to plan a continuum of academic supports across all grades or begun to systematically address the performance of student groups to address achievement gaps. Use of data at the high school to inform teaching is in its early stages and the teachers and the new principal have begun to develop more frequent and common assessments to address this need. However, the high school has a well-developed and inclusive Capstone Projects program that is cross-discipline and enables students to demonstrate their learning in creative and challenging ways.

The district has a well-established system of Pre-K–12 supports for students' social-emotional needs. The district has developed partnerships with several community organizations to enhance academic programs and provide students with opportunities to engage in the community. Interviews and the team's observations indicated a welcoming, respectful school community committed to meeting the

social-emotional and developmental needs of its students. Classroom observations indicated classroom climates conducive to teaching and learning.

The school committee and the community have provided the financial support to fund school programs. See the District Profile below and Table B.3 in Appendix B.

Instruction

The team observed 55 classes throughout the district: 26 at the high school, 14 at the middle school, and 15 at the 2 elementary schools. The team observed 17 ELA classes, 16 mathematics classes, and 22 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were two special education classes. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using DESE's Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented in Appendix C.

In observed classrooms, the quality of instruction was stronger at the middle school than at the elementary and high schools and there was a low incidence of variation in teaching strategies and attention to diverse learning needs at the high school. Throughout the district, the team observed classroom climates that were conducive to learning. They ranged from the thoughtfully designed and well-equipped classrooms at the new Bresnahan School, to the welcoming and well-used common learning and activity areas in the building that houses the Molin and Nock schools, to the high school's renovations that were reflective and respectful of the city's role in United States history.[1]

Strengths

1. The district has implemented a wide variety of assessments in order to provide a comprehensive picture of student performance, including many common formative and summative assessments and presentations of student projects. The assessment data provides actionable information about student and instructional needs.

2. The district has developed and staffed an extensive program to address the social-emotional and behavioral needs of its students. This program is a district priority and is consistent with the 2016–2021 Strategic Plan.

3. The district has a wide network of community partners who assist the schools to meet their goals.

[1] The renovated high school maintained elements of the historic old high school.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

1. The district does not have a documented, comprehensive K–12 curriculum fully aligned with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks or a process to develop, implement, and review curriculum.

2. In observed classrooms, the quality of instruction was stronger at the middle school than at the elementary and high schools. In observed classrooms at the high school, there was a low incidence of several important instructional practices.

3. Instructional leadership in the district is dispersed and the district has not articulated instructional expectations for teachers.

4. The district does not have a consistent approach to using data to improve teaching, learning, and decision-making. It does not consistently use data to set goals, revise curriculum, and provide programs for struggling students. While most teachers participate in PLCs, the work does not consistently include data analysis.

5. The district does not have a proactive approach and system of support to meet the needs of all students. While academic and social-emotional Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports are in place at all levels, Tier 3 academic supports are inconsistent in grades 6–12.

Recommendations

1. The district should complete with urgency its K–12 curricula. It should ensure that curricula are high quality, comprehensive, aligned with appropriate standards, and implemented consistently across classrooms and schools. The district should develop and implement an ongoing process for reviewing and revising curricula.

2. The district should ensure that all teachers provide effective instruction that challenges and supports all students.

3. The district does not have a consistent approach to using data to improve teaching, learning, and decision-making. It does not consistently use data to set goals, revise curriculum, and provide programs for struggling students. While most teachers participate in PLCs, the work does not consistently include data analysis.

4. The district should build educators' capacity to analyze and use data to improve teaching and learning.

5. The district should develop and implement a continuum of K–12 tiered academic supports for its students. It should enhance the ability of teachers to deliver universally designed practices that meet the needs of diverse learners.

Newburyport District Schools Targeted District Review Overview

Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, targeted district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. Reviews consider carefully the effectiveness of systemwide functions, with reference to three district standards used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Targeted reviews address one of the following sets of three standards: **Governance and Administrative Systems** (Leadership and Governance, Human Resources and Professional Development, and Financial and Asset Management standards) or **Student-Centered Systems** (Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support standards). All targeted reviews include finding(s) about instruction based on classroom observations. A targeted review identifies systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. In addition, the targeted district reviews is designed to promote district reflection on its own performance and potential next steps. This targeted review by the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring focused on the following standards: curriculum and instruction, assessment, and student support.

DESE and the district collaboratively identify the focus of a targeted district review.

Methodology

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

Site Visit

The site visit to the Newburyport Public Schools was conducted from January 7–9, 2019. The site visit included 22 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 108 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students, students' families, and teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted 4 focus groups with 30 elementary-school teachers, 9 middle-school teachers, and 11 high-school teachers.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, attendance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instruction in 55 classrooms in 4 schools. The team collected data using DESE's Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

Newburyport has a mayor-council form of government and the mayor chairs the school committee. The seven members of the school committee meet twice each month.

The superintendent has been in the position since July 2018. The district leadership team includes the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, the director of student services, and the executive assistant to the superintendent for finance and human resources. Central office positions have been stable in number over the past several years. The district has five principals leading four schools. There are three assistant/associate principals. In 2017–2018, there were 186 teachers in the district.

In the 2017–2018 school year, 2,269 students were enrolled in the district's 4 schools:

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

School	Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Francis T. Bresnahan School	ES	Pre-K–3	615
Edward G. Molin Elementary School	ES	4–5	321
Rupert A. Nock Middle School	MS	6–8	559
Newburyport High School	HS	9–12	774
Totals	**4 schools**	**Pre-K–12**	**2,269**

*As of October 1, 2017

Between 2014 and 2018 overall student enrollment decreased by 2.6 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English learners (ELs) and former ELs) as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

The total in-district per-pupil expenditure was above the median in-district per-pupil expenditure for 48 K–12 districts of similar size (2,000–2,999 students) in fiscal year 2017; $15,595, as compared with

$14,595. Actual net school spending has been well above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B3 in Appendix B.

Student Performance

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

Table 2: Newburyport Public Schools
Accountability Percentile, Criterion Reference Target (CRT) Percentage, Reason for Classification

School	Accountability Percentile	CRT Percentage	Overall Classification	Reason For Classification
Bresnahan Elementary	--	99%	Requiring assistance or intervention	In need of focused/targeted support: Low participation rate for students with disabilities
Molin Elementary	45	68%	Not requiring assistance or intervention	Partially meeting targets
Nock Middle	56	28%	Not requiring assistance or intervention	Partially meeting targets
Newburyport High	76	80%	Not requiring assistance or intervention	Meeting targets
District	--	56%	Not requiring assistance or intervention	Partially meeting targets

Table 3: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Scaled Scores Grades 3–8, 2017–2018

Group	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	State (2018)	Above/Below
African American/Black	11	482.8	488.1	5.3	490.3	-2.2
Asian	16	492.6	492.3	-0.3	511.6	-19.3
Hispanic or Latino	24	485.7	489.7	4.0	489.7	0.0
Multi-Race	16	505.7	508.7	3.0	502.8	5.9
White	954	503.6	504.5	0.9	504.2	0.3
High Needs	297	485.4	488.9	3.5	490.1	-1.2
Econ. Dis.	111	487.3	490.2	2.9	490.2	0.0
SWD	221	482.1	485.6	3.5	480.8	4.8
EL	16	476.6	480.1	3.5	488.4	-8.3
All	1,021	502.9	503.9	1.0	500.5	3.4

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

Table 4: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS Math Scaled Scores Grades 3–8, 2017–2018

Group	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	State (2018)	Above/Below
African American/Black	11	478.1	480.2	2.1	486.9	-6.7
Asian	15	501.2	493.3	-7.9	514.3	-21.0
Hispanic or Latino	24	490.2	487.6	-2.6	487.4	0.2
Multi-Race	16	503.9	501.3	-2.6	499.7	1.6
White	952	503.7	501.9	-1.8	501.8	0.1
High Needs	295	486.3	486.5	0.2	488.2	-1.7
Econ. Dis.	111	486.9	487.1	0.2	487.7	-0.6
SWD	219	482.8	483.8	1.0	479.2	4.6
EL	16	479.4	481.2	1.8	488.5	-7.3
All	1,018	503.1	501.2	-1.9	498.4	2.8

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

Table 5: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations Grades 3–8, 2017–2018

Group	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	State (2018)	Above/Below
African American/Black	11	14%	27%	13	31%	-4
Asian	16	47%	38%	-9	71%	-33
Hispanic or Latino	24	25%	42%	17	31%	11
Multi-Race	16	67%	75%	8	54%	21
White	954	59%	60%	1	58%	2
High Needs	297	20%	26%	6	31%	-5
Econ. Dis.	111	31%	29%	-2	32%	-3
SWD	221	11%	19%	8	14%	5
EL	16	23%	19%	-4	30%	-11
All	1,021	58%	59%	1	51%	8

Table 6: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations Grades 3–8, 2017–2018

Group	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	State (2018)	Above/Below
African American/Black	11	0%	9%	9	26%	-17
Asian	15	58%	40%	-18	74%	-34
Hispanic or Latino	24	24%	33%	9	27%	6
Multi-Race	16	72%	44%	-28	49%	-5
White	952	60%	54%	-6	55%	-1
High Needs	295	23%	20%	-3	28%	-8
Econ. Dis.	111	27%	23%	-4	27%	-4
SWD	219	17%	16%	-1	14%	2
EL	16	14%	25%	11	30%	-5
All	1,018	59%	53%	-6	48%	5

Table 7: Newburyport Public Schools
MCAS ELA Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2017–2018

Group	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	State (2018)	Above/Below
African American/Black	1	--	--	--	85%	--
Asian	5	--	--	--	95%	--
Hispanic or Latino	7	82%	--	--	78%	--
Multi-Race	4	--	--	--	93%	--
White	157	96%	97%	1	94%	3
High Needs	32	78%	84%	6	79%	5
Econ. Dis.	16	78%	88%	10	81%	7
SWD	16	71%	69%	-2	69%	0
EL	3	--	--	--	64%	--
All	175	95%	97%	2	91%	6

Table 8: Newburyport Public Schools
MCAS Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2017–2018

Group	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	State (2018)	Above/Below
African American/Black	1	--	--	--	60%	--
Asian	5	--	--	--	91%	--
Hispanic or Latino	8	40%	--	--	56%	--
Multi-Race	4	--	--	--	79%	--
White	156	87%	94%	7	85%	9
High Needs	33	40%	73%	33	57%	16
Econ. Dis.	17	48%	82%	34	59%	23
SWD	17	19%	47%	28	40%	7
EL	3	--	--	--	44%	--
All	175	83%	93%	10	78%	15

Table 9: Newburyport Public Schools
MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grades 5, 8, and 10, 2015–2018

Group	N (2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change	State (2018)
African American/Black	5	--	--	--	--	--	30%
Asian	8	--	--	63%	--	--	68%
Hispanic or Latino	14	--	73%	54%	29%	--	30%
Multi-Race	12	--	71%	--	83%	--	54%
White	445	68%	71%	65%	62%	-6	60%
High Needs	123	36%	39%	30%	30%	-6	31%
Econ. Dis.	51	50%	49%	40%	43%	-7	32%
SWD	84	22%	26%	18%	19%	-3	21%
EL	8	--	--	--	--	--	20%
All	484	68%	71%	65%	61%	-7	53%

Table 10: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3–8, 2017–2018

Grade	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	State (2018)	Above/Below
3	139	47%	68%	21	52%	16
4	176	53%	53%	0	53%	0
5	149	53%	60%	7	54%	6
6	198	58%	62%	4	51%	11
7	194	57%	57%	0	46%	11
8	165	74%	58%	-16	51%	7
3–8	1,021	58%	59%	1	51%	8

Table 11: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3–8, 2017–2018

Grade	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	State (2018)	Above/Below
3	137	59%	65%	6	50%	15
4	175	53%	38%	-15	48%	-10
5	149	58%	51%	-7	46%	5
6	198	57%	48%	-9	47%	1
7	193	55%	58%	3	46%	12
8	166	68%	59%	-9	50%	9
3–8	1,018	59%	53%	-6	48%	5

Table 12: Newburyport Public Schools
MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grades 5, 8, and 10, 2015–2018

Grade	N (2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change	State (2018)
5	148	56%	54%	47%	45%	-11	47%
8	166	56%	67%	61%	41%	-15	35%
10	170	88%	91%	87%	94%	6	74%
All	484	68%	71%	65%	61%	-7	52%

Table 13: Newburyport Public Schools
English Language Arts and Math Mean Student Growth Percentile, 2018

	ELA			Math		
Grade	N (2018)	2018	State 2018	N (2018)	2018	State (2018)
3	--	--	--	--	--	--
4	167	50.2	50.0	165	34.2	50.1
5	141	44.0	50.1	141	52.4	50.0
6	188	52.5	50.1	188	39.5	50.0
7	188	52.7	50.0	185	61.4	50.0
8	157	50.0	50.0	157	57.9	50.0
10	150	50.5	49.9	150	48.2	49.9

Table 14: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by School and Grade, 2018

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3–8
Bresnahan	68%	--	--	--	--	--	68%
Molin	--	55%	61%	--	--	--	57%
Nock Middle	--	--	--	63%	58%	59%	60%
District	68%	53%	60%	62%	57%	58%	59%
State	52%	53%	54%	51%	46%	51%	51%

Table 15: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by School and Grade, 2018

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3–8
Bresnahan	65%	--	--	--	--	--	65%
Molin	--	39%	52%	--	--	--	45%
Nock Middle	--	--	--	48%	59%	60%	56%
District	65%	38%	51%	48%	58%	59%	53%
State	50%	48%	46%	47%	46%	50%	48%

Table 16: Newburyport Public Schools
MCAS ELA and Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2018

School	ELA	Math
Newburyport High	97%	94%
State	91%	78%

Table 17: Newburyport Public Schools
MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced by School and Grade, 2018

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	Total
Bresnahan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Molin	--	--	46%	--	--	--	--	46%
Nock Middle	--	--	--	--	--	41%	--	41%
Newburyport High	--	--	--	--	--	--	95%	95%
District	--	--	45%	--	--	41%	94%	61%
State	--	--	47%	--	--	35%	74%	52%

Table 18: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations by School, 2018

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Bresnahan	68%	45%	40%	42%	--	--	--	--	--	68%
Molin	57%	21%	26%	15%	--	--	--	--	--	58%
Nock Middle	60%	24%	31%	15%	--	--	--	27%	80%	61%
District	59%	26%	29%	19%	19%	27%	38%	42%	75%	60%
State	51%	31%	32%	14%	30%	31%	71%	31%	54%	58%

Table 19: Newburyport Public Schools
Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations by School, 2018

School	All	High Needs	Econ. Dis.	SWD	EL	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multi-race	White
Bresnahan	65%	44%	40%	41%	--	--	--	--	--	64%
Molin	45%	13%	18%	10%	--	--	--	--	--	47%
Nock Middle	56%	20%	24%	13%	--	--	--	27%	50%	57%
District	53%	20%	23%	16%	25%	9%	40%	33%	44%	54%
State	48%	28%	27%	14%	30%	26%	74%	27%	49%	55%

Table 20: Newburyport Public Schools
MCAS ELA and Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2015–2018

	ELA					Math				
School/Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change
Newburyport High	97%	98%	96%	97%	0	91%	91%	86%	94%	3
African American/Black	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Asian	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hispanic	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Multi-race	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
White	97%	99%	96%	97%	0	91%	92%	88%	94%	3
High Needs	84%	91%	80%	83%	-1	63%	59%	46%	76%	13
Econ. Dis.	89%	88%	85%	87%	-2	74%	76%	55%	87%	13
SWD	71%	89%	71%	62%	-9	46%	39%	24%	46%	0
EL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Table 21: Newburyport Public Schools
MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Science by School and Student Group, 2015–2018

School	N (2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change
Bresnahan	--	--	--	--	--	--
Molin	145	57%	55%	48%	46%	-11%
African American/Black	2	--	--	--	--	--
Asian	2	--	--	--	--	--
Hispanic	4	--	--	--	--	--
Multi-race	4	--	--	--	--	--
White	133	57%	55%	49%	48%	-9%
High Needs	44	28%	28%	18%	14%	-14%

Econ. Dis.	15	47%	31%	17%	27%	-20%
SWD	33	17%	17%	17%	12%	-5%
EL	3	--	--	--	--	--
Nock Middle	164	56%	67%	62%	41%	-15%
African American/Black	1	--	--	--	--	--
Asian	1	--	--	--	--	--
Hispanic	3	--	--	--	--	--
Multi-race	4	--	--	--	--	--
White	155	57%	69%	61%	41%	-16%
High Needs	44	19%	29%	28%	18%	-1%
Econ. Dis.	19	27%	--	28%	26%	-1%
SWD	31	10%	21%	17%	10%	0%
EL	2	--	--	--	--	--
Newburyport High	168	89%	93%	88%	95%	6%
African American/Black	1	--	--	--	--	--
Asian	5	--	--	--	--	--
Hispanic	7	--	--	--	--	--
Multi-race	4	--	--	--	--	--
White	151	88%	92%	89%	96%	8%
High Needs	28	65%	69%	52%	79%	14%
Econ. Dis.	14	80%	85%	67%	86%	6%
SWD	13	48%	50%	25%	62%	14%
EL	3	--	--	--	--	--

Table 22: Newburyport Public Schools
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2014–2017

Group	N (2017)	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
African American/Black	--	--	--	--	--	--	80.0
Asian	--	85.7	--	85.7	--	--	94.1
Hispanic or Latino	--	--	100.0	--	--	--	74.4
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	--	--	--	83.3	--	--	85.2
White	203	96.6	96.6	96.9	96.1	-0.5	92.6
High needs	61	82.9	86.7	88.7	82.0	-0.9	80.0
Economically Disadvantaged*	45	73.3	90.6	84.8	80.0	6.7	79.0
SWD	30	78.3	73.9	86.7	76.7	-1.6	72.8
EL	--	--	--	--	--	--	63.4
All	217	95.7	96.4	95.6	94.0	-1.7	88.3

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

Table 23: Newburyport Public Schools
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2013–2016

Group	N (2016)	2013	2014	2015	2016	4-yr Change	State (2016)
African American/Black	--	--	--	--	--	--	83.4
Asian	7	--	85.7	--	85.7	--	94.8
Hispanic or Latino	--	--	--	100.0	--	--	76.8
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	6	--	--	--	100.0	--	87.4
White	163	97.2	96.6	96.6	98.2	1.0	93.5
High needs	53	84.0	82.9	86.7	90.6	6.6	82.9
Economically Disadvantaged*	33	79.3	73.3	90.6	84.8	5.5	82.1
SWD	30	88.9	78.3	73.9	90.0	1.1	76.5
EL	--	--	--	--	--	--	70.9
All	181	95.8	95.7	96.4	97.2	1.4	89.8

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

Table 24: Newburyport Public Schools
In-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2015–2018

Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change	State (2018)
African American/Black	--	--	--	--	--	3.4
Asian	--	--	--	--	--	0.6
Hispanic or Latino	--	--	--	--	--	2.4
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	--	--	--	--	--	2.3
White	0.1	--	0.4	0.1	0.0	1.4
High Needs	--	--	0.9	0.3	--	2.7
Economically disadvantaged*	--	--	1.6	0.8	--	2.9
SWD	--	--	--	0.2	--	3.3
EL	--	--	--	--	--	1.8
All	0.1	--	0.4	0.1	0.0	1.8

Table 25: Newburyport Public Schools
Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2015–2018

Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change	State (2018)
African American/Black	--	--	--	--	--	6.0
Asian	--	--	--	--	--	0.7
Hispanic or Latino	--	--	--	--	--	5.1
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	--	--	--	--	--	3.3
White	0.2	--	0.6	0.9	0.7	1.9
High Needs	--	--	1.1	2.3	--	4.6
Economically disadvantaged*	--	--	1.2	3.8	--	5.4
SWD	--	--	--	2.2	--	5.8
EL	--	--	--	--	--	3.7
All	0.2	--	0.7	1.0	0.8	2.9

Table 26: Newburyport Public Schools
Dropout Rates by Student Group, 2014–2017

Group	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-yr Change	State (2017)
African American/Black	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	2.9
Asian	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	-12.5	0.6
Hispanic or Latino	6.7	4.8	0.0	10.0	3.3	4.2
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	5.9	0.0	0.0	5.9	0.0	1.7
White	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.0	1.1
High Needs	0.7	0.8	2.8	4.3	3.6	3.5
Economically disadvantaged*	0.0	0.0	2.7	3.9	3.9	3.6
SWD	1.2	0.0	2.5	5.5	4.3	3.3
EL	--	--	--	--	--	6.5
All	0.9	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.0	1.8

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

Table 27: Newburyport Public Schools
Advanced Coursework Completion, 2017–2018

Group	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	Target
African American/Black	5	--	--	--	--
Asian	4	--	--	--	--
Hispanic or Latino	17	--	--	--	--
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino	10	--	--	--	--
White	343	63.3	64.1	0.8	68.4
High Needs	64	27.0	18.8	-8.2	34.0
Economically disadvantaged	34	--	--	--	--
SWD	33	--	--	--	--
EL	5	--	--	--	--
All	379	61.1	63.1	2.0	65.7

Table 28: Newburyport Public Schools
Progress toward Attaining English Language Proficiency, 2017–2018

	Non-high school					High school				
Group	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	Target	N (2018)	2017	2018	Change	Target
EL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
All	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Table 29: Newburyport Public Schools
Chronic Absence Rates,* 2017–2018

	Non-high school					High school				
Group	**N (2018)**	**2017**	**2018**	**Change**	**Target**	**N (2018)**	**2017**	**2018**	**Change**	**Target**
African American/Black	18	--	--	--	--	6	--	--	--	--
Asian	22	--	--	--	--	17	--	--	--	--
Hispanic or Latino	45	--	--	--	--	40	--	--	--	--
Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat.	19	--	--	--	--	21	--	--	--	--
White	1,218	4.2	4.4	-0.2	3.2	712	9.2	7.4	1.8	8.2
High needs	373	9.3	9.1	0.2	7.4	160	28.0	28.8	-0.8	26.1
Economically Disadvantaged	121	--	--	--	--	73	--	--	--	--
SWD	261	--	--	--	--	82	--	--	--	--
EL	36	--	--	--	--	19	--	--	--	--
All	1,322	4.3	4.8	-0.5	3.2	797	10.3	9.9	0.4	9.2

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

Curriculum and Instruction

Contextual Background

Newburyport is using its 2016–2021 Strategic Plan as its anchor and guide for school improvement. Central to the plan is the establishment of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) culture with content relevant to 21st century skills. The plan is committed to building a growth mindset throughout the district and re-imagining teaching and learning. The plan prioritizes project-based learning as well as the development of interdisciplinary units. The district is working on developing units, Pre-K–12, using the skills-based learning model referred to by the district as Reimagine. Districtwide leadership for curriculum and instruction is the responsibility of the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction; at the K–8 level, there are also two coordinators, one for literacy and one for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The district reorganized its model for school-level curriculum leadership over two years before the onsite review in January 2019 and some positions remained unfilled. For example, at the time of the onsite the high school did not have curriculum teacher leaders.

In the 2014–2015 school year, K–8 teachers implemented the Eureka math curriculum. Eureka math provides scope and sequence documents, pacing guides, and curriculum maps as well as a bank of common formative and summative assessments including exit tickets. The district does not have a formal, documented ELA curriculum. Teachers work independently or in grade-level groups to design units for ELA. A dedicated literacy block K–5 follows the Reader's Workshop model. K–2 teachers use the Spell Links program for phonics. Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) is the writing program in place for kindergarten through grade 5. Middle-school teachers, who are guided by the Massachusetts ELA Frameworks, work individually and in grade-level teams designing instructional units. High-school teachers collaborate and develop lessons within their specific content areas. They have developed a well-articulated, detailed program of study. The high school's curriculum is separate from the K–8 curriculum. The team was told that in recent years the district has expanded AP offerings. At the time of the onsite in January 2019, although access to rigorous coursework was somewhat constrained because of course prerequisites and the need for teachers' recommendations, the district was working toward improved equity of access to rigorous coursework.

Beginning in 2017, with support from the Newburyport Education Foundation, the schools established a districtwide science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) initiative. A STEM coordinator guides K–8 work to upgrade and expand STEM programs. A dedicated STEM space at the Bresnahan Elementary School supports students in becoming creative problem solvers and critical thinkers. Beginning in academic year 2018–2019, Newburyport High School added several STEM course offerings such as Engineering in the 21st Century.

In observed classrooms, the quality of instruction varied widely across the district with generally stronger instruction at the middle school than at the elementary and high-school levels and a low

incidence of variation in instructional strategies and attention to diverse learning needs at the high school. At the time of the onsite in January 2019, the new superintendent recognized the extent of the instructional challenges the district faced, and was carefully considering the ways in which the district could further improve instruction.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

1. **The district does not have a documented, comprehensive K–12 curriculum fully aligned with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks or a process to develop, and review curriculum.**

   A. The district is using Eureka math as its K–8 math curriculum.

   1. A review of the district's website indicated that the district adopted Eureka math "to support alignment to the math Common Core state standards."

   B. Interviews with district leaders and teachers and a document review indicated that the district did not have a comprehensive K–8 ELA curriculum.

   1. The district provided "Newburyport District's Literacy Approach," a one-page description and flowchart of the K–5 reading instructional block and suggested timing for each area. While the document includes using the Massachusetts ELA curriculum framework as a starting point for curriculum development, it mainly addresses the district's expectations about methodology in the teaching of literacy.

   2. In its self-assessment submitted in advance of the onsite review, the district reported that in K–8 literacy "There are various components of literacy at each grade level that are well aligned to the frameworks and others that are still in progress."

   3. Teachers in grades 4–5 reported that the district did not have a scope and sequence document in ELA for grades 4 and 5. Pre-K–3 teachers stated that they did not have a cohesive, coordinated ELA program.

   C. Curriculum development is uneven from grade to grade and not directed by a representative team of Pre-K–12 teachers.

   1. Individual grade-level teams develop ELA units and operate independently. Teachers told the team that unit development took place during their common planning or prep periods. For example, middle-school teachers use the state standards but have no mapping other than what teachers do together as grade levels.

   2. In documents provided by the district, the review team found a mix of curriculum documentation approaches and styles. Some curricular documents used an Understanding

by Design approach, some were DESE model curriculum units, and some appeared to be adaptations of units from other school districts. Some sample units contained critical vocabulary, assessments, and adaptations for diverse learners. The review team did not find a consistent expectation in the district about what curriculum documents should contain.

3. Teachers reported limited communication between K–12 teachers and district administrators about curriculum from grade to grade to address consistent implementation of curriculum across classrooms and schools.

D. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district did not have a systematic K–12 process in place to develop, implement, and review curriculum.

1. In its self-assessment submitted in advance of the onsite review, district leaders stated that there have not been any curriculum reviews aligning curriculum in ELA or mathematics since 2013. K–8 ELA curriculum is listed as “in progress.”

2. In the district’s self-assessment, district leaders rated curriculum selection and use as "Somewhat Well" described by the indicator: “The district implements regular, rigorous curriculum reviews that consider specific district needs as well as relevant research.” Possible ratings are “”Very Well, “Well,” “Somewhat Well,” and “Not at All Well.”

3. The superintendent stated that the district did not have a systematic process in place for looking at curriculum and that he wanted those systems to be developed.

4. District leaders told the review team that the district has shifted its focus from curriculum mapping and curriculum review to teacher-run professional learning communities (PLCs) and the 2016–2021 Strategic Plan.

E. The district does not have a repository to house all curricular information. Teachers access curriculum in several ways.

1. Teachers stated that in order to find out what to teach, a new teacher would ask her or his mentor or other grade-level colleagues. At the time of the onsite review in January 2019, the high school had not had department chairs for 2-1/2 years. Some high-school teachers stated that this situation was particularly difficult for new teachers.

2. Teachers in some grade levels informally collaborate, develop, and share curriculum with the colleagues in their grade, but the practice is inconsistent within schools and from school to school.

    a. For example, teachers in grade 4 share units, assessments, suggestions, and ideas using Google Classroom. Grade-level teachers have a code to access this information but other teachers wishing to access the information must request and be granted access to Google Classroom.

Impact: The absence of an aligned, purposefully implemented, and regularly updated curriculum that is easily accessible for teachers means that students do not have access to high-quality teaching and learning.

2. **In observed classrooms, the quality of instruction was stronger at the middle school than at the elementary and high schools. In observed classrooms at the high school, there was a low incidence of several important instructional practices.**

   A. **Focus Area #1: Learning Objectives & Expectations.** Instructional practices that reflected elements of effective instructional design varied among levels.

      1. Review team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence that the teacher ensured that students understood what they should be learning in the lesson and why (characteristic #2) in in 60 percent of elementary classes, in 93 percent of middle-school classes, and in 74 percent of high-school classes.

         a. For example, in a high-school English class, the objective was posted and individual students understood that they were applying satirical techniques in a creative written response to *Pride and Prejudice*.

         b. In a 6th grade social studies class, in an attempt to clear up possible confusion from a previous class, the teacher explained to students why they were identifying challenging vocabulary.

         c. In contrast, in a number of classes an agenda was posted without the context of an objective.

      2. Review team members saw sufficient and compelling evidence that the teacher used appropriate learning activities well matched to the learning objective(s) (characteristic #3) in 60 percent of elementary classes, in 100 percent of middle-school classes, and in 61 percent of high-school classes.

         a. In a kindergarten math class in which the teacher used appropriate learning activities well matched to the learning objectives(s), the teacher provided students with different ways to measure common items, including counters and manipulation.

         b. In a high-school English class where the teacher did not use appropriate learning activities well matched to the learning objective(s), the teacher read a short poem but students were not given the opportunity to discuss it.

   B. **Focus Area #2: Student Engagement & Higher-Order Thinking** At the high school, review team members observed a lower incidence of lessons that reflected higher-order thinking and student discourse about content and ideas than at other levels.

1. Review team members saw sufficient and compelling evidence that students engaged in higher-order thinking (characteristic #6) in 66 percent of elementary classes, in 79 percent of middle-school classes, and in 57 percent of high-school classes.

    a. For example, in a grade 8 science class, students in groups read several articles about mutation, discussed the articles, and explained what they had read. The teacher mixed the groups so that all students explained what they had read.

    b. In a 6th grade math class, students provided detailed explanations as to how they solved problems.

    c. In a high-school science class where students were not engaged in higher-order thinking, the teacher asked challenging questions, did not receive a response from students, and then answered the questions himself.

2. Review team members saw sufficient and compelling evidence that students communicated their ideas and thinking with each other (characteristic #7) in 67 percent of elementary classrooms, in 78 percent of middle-school classes, and in 50 percent of high-school classrooms.

    a. In a middle-school science class in which students communicated their ideas and thinking with each other, students read different articles on mutation, and each student explained to the group what he/she had read.

    b. In a second grade ELA class, each student explained to a neighbor what poetry was.

    c. In a high-school English class, students posed questions after two students presented a report, and the reporting students responded with detailed answers to the questions.

    d. In many classrooms, however, communication took place between the teacher and students rather than between and among students.

C. Focus Area #3: Inclusive Practice & Classroom Culture. In observed classrooms at the high school, team members saw a low incidence of two characteristics of effective instruction in this focus area: the teacher ensures that students are engaging in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs and the teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies.

1. Observers found sufficient and compelling evidence that the teacher ensured that students were engaged in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs (characteristic #9) in 60 percent of elementary classrooms, in 86 percent of middle -school classrooms, and in just 35 percent of high-school classrooms.

    a. In a 6th grade social studies class, students receiving language support entered during the lesson, blended well into the classroom paired activity, and engaged immediately.

b. In many high-school classes, observers found few accommodations for students to ensure that they could engage in challenging tasks regardless of their learning needs.

2. The team noted sufficient and compelling evidence that the teacher used a variety of instructional strategies (characteristic #10) in 67 percent of elementary classrooms, in 79 percent of middle-school classrooms, and in only 27 percent of high-school classrooms.

   a. For example, in a 6th grade social studies class, the teacher used direct instruction and paired learning.

   b. In a kindergarten math class, the teacher provided direct instruction, and students used manipulatives and worked with their peers.

   c. In a number of high-school classes, instruction was primarily teacher directed.

Impact: Without consistent delivery of effective, research-based instruction in all grades and subjects, the district cannot consistently provide all its students with high-quality instruction, optimize their learning opportunities, and prepare them for college, careers, and civic participation.

3. Instructional leadership in the district is dispersed and the district has not articulated instructional expectations for teachers.

A. District schools operate independently of one another.

1. Principals agreed that the district focused on individual schools and their instructional plans, noting that the district has not articulated K–12 instructional expectations for teachers.

2. Some teachers reported a "disconnect" in communication across schools and a need for teachers' knowledge of curriculum and instruction beyond their own levels.

B. Administrative oversight of, and support for, classroom instruction and teachers' professional growth is inconsistent.

1. Some teachers stated that they had not received formal evaluations or informal feedback on their work.

2. Teachers said that they frequently participated in professional development outside the schools. This external professional learning is individual and does not necessarily support or reflect the school's or the district's priorities.

   a. Funding for individual external professional development often comes from local education support groups and does not require administrative approval.

C. Interviews and a document review indicated that the superintendent developed 2018–2019 district goals, which were approved by the school committee in January 2019. The goals include professional learning goals, student learning goals, and school and district improvement goals. Several goals relate to improving existing structures to identify, share, and acknowledge best instructional practices across the district.

Impact: Without cohesive districtwide instructional leadership, the district cannot ensure that all teachers provide effective instruction that challenges and supports all students. Without coordination of K–12 instructional programs, students' learning may not be coherent or of consistently high quality.

Recommendations

1. **The district should complete with urgency its K–12 curricula. It should ensure that curricula are high quality, comprehensive, aligned with appropriate standards, and implemented consistently across classrooms and schools. The district should develop and implement an ongoing process for reviewing and revising curricula.**

   A. The district should complete as soon as possible its K–12 curricula, starting with English language arts and literacy.

      1. The district should ensure that K–12 curricula include curriculum units, objectives, resources, instructional strategies to reach all learners, timelines, and formative and summative assessments.

      2. The district should ensure that all teachers have access to the district's K–12 curricular materials and the support that they need to use those materials consistently and skillfully.

   B. The district should develop a process for the regular review and revision of curricula.

      1. District leaders should develop and implement a formal cyclical planning process to review and renew curriculum.

      2. As part of the planning process, the district should consider specifying the roles that central office staff, principals, and school-based staff will perform.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will help to ensure that teachers and students have access to an updated, comprehensive, and clearly articulated curriculum that prepares students for success in high school and beyond.

Recommended resources:

- DESE's *Instructional Materials and Professional Development* page (www.doe.mass.edu/candi/impd/) provides resources for improving and collaborating on

curriculum, including quick reference guides and maps designed to facilitate cross-district communication about curriculum.

- DESE's *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/) provides information about the 2017 English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics Frameworks, including grade-by-grade comparisons between the 2010 and 2017 Frameworks and a slide deck supporting implementation of the 2017 Frameworks.

- EdReports.org (http://www.edreports.org/) provides free, independent reviews of K-12 education materials. The reviews focus on alignment to college and career ready standards and other indicators of high quality as recommended by educators.

- *Quick Reference Guide: Aligning Curriculum to Massachusetts Standards* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/impd/qrg-aligning-curriculum.pdf) is designed to support teachers, coaches, administrators, and curriculum developers in the work of considering the ways in which curricular materials may diverge from the Massachusetts standards.

- *Quick Reference Guide: Assessing Your Curriculum Landscape* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/impd/qrg-assessing-curriculum.pdf) is designed to support districts assess their curriculum landscape by asking three questions: (1) Do teachers have ready access to high-quality, standards-aligned curricular materials? (2) Do sustained and collaborative professional learning structures empower teachers to use those materials in ways responsive to their students' needs? (3) Are curriculum review processes regular, rigorous, and responsive to stakeholder input and needs?

2. The district should ensure that all teachers provide effective instruction that challenges and supports all students.

A. The district should convene a cross-section of teachers and instructional leaders to identify the district's instructional strengths and challenges.

1. This process should be informed by student outcomes and other data (see E below).

2. Areas of focus should include engaging students in higher-order thinking, promoting student discourse about content and ideas, supporting and challenging students regardless of learning needs, and using a variety of instructional strategies.

3. Professional development should focus on instructional areas that need strengthening as applied to the specific curricula that students and teachers work with every day.

B. The district is encouraged to provide opportunities for educators to discuss ideas and strategies for improvement of instruction.

1. These opportunities might include grade-level, department meetings, common planning time, faculty meetings, and professional days.

2. Equitable opportunities should be provided by level for teachers to share best practices, with a particular emphasis on opportunities for high-school educators to observe exemplary peers.

3. The district should develop structures to support peer observation to both model instructional feedback and encourage peer feedback.

C. The district should take steps to ensure that teachers receive appropriate guidance and high-quality feedback[2] so that their instruction challenges and supports all students.

D. As stated in the 2018–2019 district goals document, the superintendent plans to work with the leadership team to improve instruction. Principals and other instructional leaders should ensure that teachers have the information and support necessary to strengthen identified areas of challenge.

E. The review team recommends that evaluators consider aggregating their walkthrough data to identify district and school instructional trends in practice, calibrate ratings, and generalize feedback from these walkthroughs.

1. Administrators are encouraged to continue conducting walkthroughs in administrative teams to more consistently understand district trends in practice, calibrate ratings, and generalize feedback from these walkthroughs. This practice will provide the district with quantitative data on instructional trends across the district.

2. The district should share trends in practice (strengths and areas for growth) with staff and use these trends to further discussions of best practice.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will mean a deeper understanding of instructional challenges and strengths across the district, a stronger culture of professional growth and improvement, and instruction that is more clearly aligned with district priorities. In addition, the district likely will ensure that all teachers provide high-quality instruction that focuses on challenging and engaging tasks with measurable outcomes for all students.

Recommended resources:

- DESE's *"What to Look For" Observation Guides* (Updated August 2017) (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/observation/) describe what observers should expect to see in a classroom at a particular grade level in a specific subject area. This includes the knowledge and skills students should be learning and using (as reflected in state learning standards) and best practices

[2] High-quality feedback is specific, timely, and actionable.

related to classroom curriculum, instruction, and assessment for each subject area. The guides are not designed to replace any evaluation system or tools districts currently use, but are a resource to help classroom observers efficiently identify what teachers and students should be experiencing in specific subjects and grade levels.

- DESE's *Online Calibration Training Platform* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/calibration/) uses videos of classroom instruction to simulate brief, unannounced observations. Groups of educators, such as a district leadership team, watch a video together and then individually assess the educator's practice related to specific elements from the Model Classroom Teacher Rubric and provide the educator with written feedback. Through real-time data displays, the group members can then see how their conclusions compare to each other, as well educators throughout the state.

- DESE's *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/title-iia/ImplementationGuide2016.docx) is a resource to support instructional leaders in establishing a Learning Walkthrough process in a school or district. It is designed to provide guidance to those working in an established culture of collaboration as well as those who are just beginning to observe classrooms and discuss teaching and learning in a focused and actionable manner. (The link above includes a presentation to introduce Learning Walkthroughs.)

  Appendix 4, *Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice* (http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/continuum-practice.pdf) is a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning.

Assessment

Contextual Background

At the elementary and middle-school levels, the district administers several formative and summative assessments such as DIBELS[3] and STAR 360 in addition to MCAS assessments. In 2018, common assessments in use at the high school were limited to MCAS and mid-term and final exams. In 2018–2019, the high school has begun to prepare additional common benchmark assessments to inform teachers of individual student needs and of appropriate instructional adjustments. The high school also administers AP, SAT, and ACT exams to some students and reviews students' performance and participation data. The findings below identify other assessments in use in the district.

District administrators who oversee the administration, analysis, and use of assessment data include the assistant superintendent, the K–8 literacy coach, and the K–8 STEM[4] coordinator. Title I literacy support teachers and literacy and math interventionists analyze assessment data and use it to provide remediation, to group students, and to inform some K–5 instruction. At the middle school, the literacy coach, the STEM coordinator, and teachers are responsible for analyzing assessment data and using it to identify students' needs and to inform instruction. The new high school principal has taken a leadership role in improving the use of assessment data.

The district makes assessment data available to teachers, students, families, and the community. Districtwide and school reports on MCAS and several other common assessments have been presented to the school committee and community and are available on the district's website; the reports describe strengths and challenges in behavioral as well as academic areas. Detailed analyses of this data are available to teachers. Students and parents receive MCAS assessment results by mail and have access to assignments and individual student assessment results in parent conferences and online through Aspen X2. Parents told the review team that they were satisfied with communication from the schools, noting particularly improved communication from the high school and overall satisfaction with K–12 teacher communication.

[3] DIBELS stands for Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills.
[4] STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and math.

Strength Finding

1. **The district has implemented a wide variety of assessments in order to provide a comprehensive picture of student performance, including many common formative and summative assessments and presentations of student projects. The assessment data provides actionable information about student and instructional needs.**

   A. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district used a wide range of assessments to measure student and school performance in all schools.

   1. MCAS assessments are given as required, with participation rates of 99–100 percent.

      a. Reports on MCAS performance are used to measure student achievement in ELA, math, and science for grades 3–10 and to identify areas of strength and of needed improvement. Examples of areas of focus that were determined because of data analyses include improving performance for high-school biology and for concepts related to fractions in grades 4 and 5.

   2. High-school teachers reported that they administered common departmental mid-term and final exams to measure student performance twice a year. They noted that they were writing common benchmark assessments to be administered more frequently and to include academic areas such as the arts.

   3. The high school collects data on AP, SAT, ACT, and MCAS assessments, including performance scores and participation.

   4. A document review indicated and administrators confirmed that the district administered STAR 360 assessments three times a year in grades 4–8 to measure achievement and progress in ELA and math.

      a. Teachers and administrators reported that STAR 360, MCAS, and teacher recommendation data were used to assign students to remediation for elementary groups with interventionists, for interventions during middle-school flex time, for math-level placement for incoming ninth graders, and for informal after-school or study-hall support. Assessment data also helps to identify curricular areas needing improvement, such as identifying the main idea in text.

   5. Elementary teachers reported that the benchmark assessments from their literacy and math programs along with MCAS and STAR assessments provided the data needed to measure student achievement and to identify underachieving students.

      a. Literacy assessments include grades 3–5 self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) assessments in writing, Spell-2 for spelling, and pre- and post-writing assessments.

6. Middle-school teachers use common benchmark assessments in all subject areas; some assessments are a part of the math program and teachers develop others.

B. Formative assessments are used K–8 to identify the learning needs of individual students, to measure their growth/progress, and to assign students to remediation or enrichment classes.

1. According to the district's self-assessment submitted in advance of the onsite, teachers administer DIBELS and Fountas and Pinnell assessments three or more times a year in the elementary grades to screen students for literacy needs and to measure their progress. Teachers reported that they used these assessments to group students by reading level and to assign them to interventions.

2. Math and ELA STAR reports and locally developed math screeners provide data to help teachers assess students' progress, determine needs for remediation, and assign students to interventions and enrichment classes. At the elementary level, a spreadsheet of aggregated student data provides a snapshot of student performance across multiple measures and includes item analyses of individual questions.

3. The K–8 math program includes exit tickets to assess students' understanding at the end of most lessons. Teachers described exit tickets as an effective tool.

C. The district has developed multidisciplinary research and project-based units at the secondary level, culminating in expositions of student work.

1. Teachers and administrators reported that students in grades 10–12 were required to prepare a Capstone multidisciplinary project culminating in a final assessment in the form of a presentation.

    a. Recent examples of Capstone projects include a tenth grade project researching the impact of poverty in certain countries using databases and other sources, and a twelfth grade project for which a production team researches and studies a topic such as current elections and then prepares a trailer for a film.

    b. Assessments take the form of a formal presentation to teachers, parents, and peers, and public presentations in the community.

2. Eighth grade students do a similar "I Am We" project and presentation such as a study of consumer products involving local vendors and culminating in a database for shoppers.

    a. Reviewers observed examples of "I Am We" presentations/assessments in the school library on topics such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Paris Accord, the cost of college tuition, and equal pay for women's sports. Each presentation/assessment included an autobiography of the student, an essay on the background of the topic, letters to senators and the governor, and an action plan.

3. In the middle and high schools, teachers help to prepare students for these projects and presentations/assessments through additional similar assessment activities: a sixth grade project based on geography with a presentation/assessment for parents, ninth grade projects based on writing myths and ballads, and high-school projects on environmental issues presented to peers.

4. Administrators described teachers providing special preparation with English learners for projects and presentations/assessments, using materials in the students' first languages and helping with the research.

D. The district collects social-emotional and behavioral data on its School Wide Information System (SWIS), including graduation, attendance, tardiness, and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) behavioral data. The district uses the data to make policy adjustments, such as the high-school tardiness policy, and for student support through the Response to Intervention (RtI) process.

E. The English learners program uses data from WIDA[5] and ACCESS[6] assessments to measure English language acquisition.

Impact: The range of assessments in use in the district helps provide multiple sources of data and a comprehensive picture of each student. The information available to teachers and support staff provides actionable information about areas of challenge in lessons and the curriculum, in students' understanding of lessons, and in remediation and enrichment needs. The Capstone and project-based assessments are measures of students' progress in areas often overlooked, such as creative thinking, team collaboration, and public persuasion.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

2. The district does not have a consistent approach to using data to improve teaching, learning, and decision-making. It does not consistently use data to set goals, revise curriculum, and provide programs for struggling students. While most teachers participate in PLCs, the work does not consistently include data analysis.

A. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district's strategic plan and School Improvement Plans (SIPs) described the need for using assessments to guide instruction and curriculum. The plans did not include clear goals and ambitious strategies for improving performance, opportunities, and outcomes for all students, and were not based on analysis of historical, longitudinal, and current disaggregated student data.

[5] WIDA stands for World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment.
[6] ACCESS stands for Assessing Comprehension and English State-to-State for English Language Learners.

1. For example, the 2016–2021 strategic plan includes strategies such as "Reimagine teaching and learning" and actions such as "Students' needs are met through teaching, learning, and assessment methods" without citing progress measures.

2. Similarly, SIPs describe strategies to use data to guide instruction and to meet student needs through project-based units but include few measurable targets for achievement.

B. The district's use of data is inconsistent and the district does not have a warehouse of students' academic data that was accessible to all staff.

1. In its self-assessment submitted in advance of the onsite, the district rated its use of data as "Somewhat Well" described by the indicator: "District and school leaders use student performance data to set and track improvement goals, including goals for closing achievement, access, and opportunity gaps. They use data to identify district strengths and weaknesses in comparison to other districts and/or state averages." The possible ratings are "Very Well," "Well," "Somewhat Well," and "Not at All Well."

    a. Administrators and some teachers described the district's use of data as inconsistent. They reported that "pockets" of school improvement goals were based on assessment data and some teachers and administrators were just beginning to develop learning goals based on assessments. They told the team that they believed that the district could dig deeper with data.

2. District leaders and teachers said that the district did not have a systemwide warehouse of students' academic data that was accessible to all teachers. Further, administrators or program leaders, rather than teachers, must upload assessment data to the databases in use at each level.

    a. In pre-kindergarten through grade 3, ELA and math interventionists prepare DIBELS[7] and benchmark achievement data for teachers to review in two or three meetings a year.

C. Meetings to support the use of data to inform instruction are not consistent or regularly scheduled.

1. Administrators reported that most teachers participated in PLCs but the focus of the work was self-selected and often did not involve data analysis.

2. Teachers and administrators reported that two faculty meetings and an early release day monthly for professional development and other discussion topics could include data analysis. Some teachers stated that the meetings did not consistently include the analysis and use of data.

[7] DIBLES stands for Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills.

a. A review of the release day agenda provided by the district indicated that at the elementary level, interventionists were scheduled to meet with teachers to review data in only one of these meetings between September 2018 and January 2019.

b. Teachers reported that at the middle school they used to meet once or twice a month to review assessment data; however, in the 2018–2019 school year they have been able to meet as a department only twice in five months to discuss data because faculty meeting and early release time were devoted to other topics.

c. A data meeting protocol for one middle-school meeting allowed only five minutes each for small groups of teachers to study assessment issues such as trends in data, student needs and solutions, and an appropriate instructional strategy.

d. Principals and teachers stated that in 2018–2019 at the high school, early-release time was devoted to developing common assessments and analyzing that data. Teachers noted that in the past they did not have planned time to talk about data.

Impact: Without clear and consistent data analysis practices, district leaders and teachers cannot effectively track students' performance and analyze the causes for low achievement. Enhancements to instruction may be less targeted and effective. When the district does not provide teachers with the time and the structures to routinely analyze data, the district compromises its ability to improve teaching, learning, and decision-making.

Recommendation

1. The district should build educators' capacity to analyze and use data to improve teaching and learning.

A. The district should continue to provide teachers with professional development about analyzing and using data to support and challenge all students.

1. The district's current data use practices (described in the Strength finding above) could serve as examples for discussion and possible expansion.

B. The district should equitable opportunities by level for teachers to review and analyze data.

C. The district should commit to the practice of developing measurable goals (including progress benchmarks and final outcomes) based on an analysis of historical, longitudinal, and current disaggregated student data.

Benefits: By implementing this recommendation, the district will likely ensure earlier and more effective identification of struggling students and their needs, improved educational strategies that match the

learning needs of all students, improved programming to ensure continuity, and higher levels of achievement for all students.

Recommended resources:

- DESE's *Assessment Literacy Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis Tool* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/ddm/webinar/PartI-GapAnalysis.pdf) is intended to support districts in understanding where their educators fit overall on a continuum of assessment literacy. After determining where the district as a whole generally falls on the continuum, districts can determine potential next steps.

- DESE's *District Data Team Toolkit* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/toolkit/district-data-toolkit.pdf#search=%22District Data Team Toolkit%22) is a set of resources to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a District Data Team.

- DESE's *Student Growth Model* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/growth/) provides links to tutorials and documents that explain the Student Growth Model, along with research supporting the model, materials to help education leaders present the model, and links to student growth data.

- The *Edwin Analytics* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/) includes links to a Getting Started Guide, as well as a video tutorial series.

Student Support

Contextual Background

The district has created a welcoming and safe environment for its students in a community that strongly supports its schools. The schools have benefited from the work of local foundations that have been generous with grants, local businesses that have provided work opportunities for student interns, and productive partnerships with various colleges and educational groups in the area.

In the five years before the onsite review in January 2019, the district established strong social-emotional and behavioral support systems for its students. It has established transitional programs for children suffering from anxiety or returning to school after hospitalization, and adopted PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports) practices K–12 and trained staff at every level in providing social-emotional and behavioral supports to students. The district has invested in social workers, psychologists, counselors, and behavioral specialists throughout the schools who provide the support needed to enable students to achieve.

The district has not established an equally cohesive K–12 system of academic supports. While the district uses data extensively to identify individual students' needs and match students with supports at the K–8 level, including a math interventionist and literacy support staff, the district has not developed a tiered system of academic support to sustain students' academic growth. For example, while members of the review team observed examples of effective teaching at all levels, many observed that lessons at the high school did not provide sufficient supports to meet the needs of all learners.

The academic supports that the district provides through its RtI (Response to Intervention) referral process are hampered by an absence of universal access to data, limited time and structures in which to analyze data, and limited formative assessments at some levels.

Parents prize the readiness of teachers to quickly return calls and provide information and feedback as needed. The willingness of the new superintendent and new high school principal to provide information to and seek input from parents, students, teachers, and school committee members has garnered praise for improved transparency.

Strength Findings

1. **The district has developed and staffed an extensive program to address the social-emotional and behavioral needs of its students. This program is a district priority and is consistent with the 2016–2021 Strategic Plan.**

   A. Interviews and a document review indicated that in 2013, having recognized the growing number of students suffering from anxiety, trauma, and depression, the district used a DESE

Safe and Supportive Schools grant to analyze the issues students faced. The district decided to become a "trauma sensitive" district and partnered with the Lesley Institute for Trauma Sensitivity.

1. Lesley assisted with the district's research into student trauma, anxiety, and stress-related conditions.

B. In 2014, Newburyport became the third district in the state to provide onsite graduate courses for staff in creating trauma-sensitive schools.

C. In June 2016, the district became the first district in Massachusetts to become certified in Behavioral Health Management.

D. After the district received a second state grant, the Bresnahan Pre-K–3 school team began to identify students suffering from anxiety, trauma, and depression. In addition, the Molin Elementary School (grades 4–5) began to implement the Social Thinking Social and Emotional Learning curriculum and the Zones of Regulation as initial steps in implementing a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model.

E. Through a grant from the May Institute, the district instituted the PBIS model to establish and encourage expected behavior K–8. The grant funded multiple trainings for teachers. The goal was to create a safe and welcoming environment for students and improve the environment for learning.

F. In conjunction with the Brookline Community Health Program, the district created the Bridging Resilient Youth in Transition (BRYT) program to support young students returning from extended absence because of mental health, hospitalization, or other issues.

G. District programs that create a positive and safe climate for learning include PBIS, the Second Step social-emotional learning program at the elementary level, and recognition rallies at the high school that acknowledge the high-quality work of teachers and students.

H. The district has staffed each school with social workers, psychologists, behavioral specialists, and/or counselors to address students' social-emotional and behavioral needs.

1. Student support teams, often led by these staff members, deploy these social-emotional resources to address the needs of referred students.

I. The school community recognizes the value of social-emotional learning as a primary focus within the district's schools.

1. The 2016–2021 Strategic Plan and the 2018–2019 district goals document prominently feature social-emotional learning.

2. The superintendent, members of the school committee, and teachers spoke of the importance of the schools' resources for students' social-emotional support.

3. High-school students said that there were several people in the school whom they could talk with if they had a problem. In particular, they cited counselors and teachers with whom they had a rapport and could engage in conversation even if they needed to talk about a difficult subject such as a friend suffering a mental health challenge.

4. Parents expressed the strong belief that their children were safe in school. In addition, parents cited many examples of how the schools cared for their children, including ALICE training,[8] the middle-school teacher teams' knowledge of the students in their care, a community program to support young girls, the Wellness Committee that provided staff with programming, and Newburyport Youth Services (see the finding below).

J. The review team observed several classrooms where teachers provided mindfulness breaks for students, time to stretch or engage in some physical activity before progressing to the next activity.

Impact: This proactive and systematic effort to address the social-emotional and behavioral needs of students has contributed to schools where students feel safe and are able to find adults in whom to confide. The programs and staffing that the district has provided have resulted in a learning environment at all levels that helps students to develop social-emotional skills and competencies and build connections that enhance learning.

2. The district has a wide network of community partners who assist the schools to meet their goals.

A. Interviews and a document review indicated that local foundations and groups regularly provided funding and assistance to the district to help achieve its goals.

1. Administrators said that teachers have sought grants from the Swasey Fund for Relief of Public School Teachers in Newburyport to fund professional development. The grants were instrumental in providing training to teachers in Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and for hiring a teacher to provide after-school remediation for the biology MCAS assessment.

2. The Newburyport Education Foundation funds specific one-time initiatives. For example, the Foundation funded the renovation of the high school auditorium and with support from Strem Chemicals in Newburyport reconfigured a room at the Bresnahan School into a flexible Pre-K–3 lab space to meet the Science Technology/Engineering Learning Standards.

[8] ALICE stands for Alert, Lock-down, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate.

3. The Beacon Coalition is a group of volunteer school staff, community members, parents, and service providers who, working with the Newburyport Youth Commission, support short-term projects to benefit the schools and students.

4. Newburyport Youth Services (NYS) supports an off-site tuition-free Learning Enrichment Center that gives children a safe place to do homework after school. Teachers devote some of their time to work in the Center. NYS also provides programming such as movies or informational programs.

B. Through partnerships with Endicott and Merrimack colleges, teaching fellows assist in elementary math classrooms.

C. Lesley University assisted with the district's research into student trauma, anxiety and stress-related conditions.

D. Local businesses provide work opportunities for between 60 and 80 student interns per semester.

Impact: The district benefits from the generosity of the community and its willingness to support the schools by supplementing the budget and extending the learning experiences of students and staff. The district's ability to tap local professional and educational resources has been of great value as it has sought to build a strong network of academic, social, and emotional support for its students.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

3. The district does not have a proactive approach and consistent system of support to meet the needs of all students. While academic and social emotional Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports are in place at all levels, Tier 3 academic supports are inconsistent in grades 6–12.

A. Interviews, observations, and a document review indicated that core instruction did not follow a data-based tiered approach to support the varied learning needs of all students.

1. In observed classrooms, the review team found sufficient and compelling evidence that teachers ensured that students were engaging in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs (characteristic #9)—a hallmark of effective Tier 1 instruction—in 60 percent of elementary classrooms, in 86 percent of middle-school classrooms, and in only 35 percent of high-school classrooms.

B. When students do not progress in the general classroom, teachers refer them to the RtI (Response to Intervention) team and may recommend Tier 2 support.

1. When students struggle with learning, they can access individualized support at some grade levels. The district has RtI teams in each school that help teachers use strategies to provide students with academic and social-emotional support.

2. A District Accommodation Plan provides intervention strategies for general education teachers.

C. Tier 2 supports are strongest and best organized at the K–5 level.

1. The Bresnahan School (Pre-K–3) has the services of the math interventionist, and four Title I teachers provide literacy instruction to targeted groups. These teachers have access to additional data and the software programs Vmath and Lexia, which are used for literacy and math interventions.

2. The Molin School (grades 4–5) has a literacy and a math interventionist. The interventionists reported doing both pull-out and push-in instruction with students.

3. In some elementary general education classrooms, teaching fellows assist student groups.

D. Tier 2 remediation options are limited at the middle and high schools.

1. The middle and high schools have few reliable assessments for screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring for planning appropriate academic remediation.

    a. At the middle school, teachers reported that they used benchmark tests and Star 360 to identify some problem areas. Administrators and teachers stated that STAR 360 offered objective data in some content areas to substantiate students' progress toward learning goals.

2. The middle and high schools have limited resources for specific, targeted academic remediation during the school day.

    a. Administrators said that when middle- and high-school students needed help they could attend after-school sessions. All teachers must remain after school one day per week. Students told the review team that teachers would stay as long as necessary to provide help on that day.

    b. At the middle school, a flex block supplements after-school sessions. Flex block is a directed study, which may help students by providing time for teacher assistance with homework and executive functioning skills. At the high school, the Learning Lab plays a similar role.

        i. The math teacher who is responsible for some Flex blocks at the middle school uses Vmath for math interventions with some students assigned to his block.

c. Teachers and interventionists told the team that a Swasey grant would fund an after-school class during the spring semester of 2019 for students who did not pass the biology MCAS exam.

d. Teachers and told the review team that students could receive extra after-school help at no cost at the Newburyport Learning Enrichment Center, which is sponsored by the Newburyport Youth Services Center.

e. The Newburyport Academy provides transitional support for students returning from hospitalization or suffering from anxiety. At-risk students may recover credits by using online programming from the Virtual High School or Educere, online high schools.

E. The district provides well-documented academic Tier 3 services and interventions at the elementary level. However, at the middle-school and high-school levels, Tier 3 is less well developed and is not data driven. Some students told the team that Tier 3 could be more effective.

1. For example, high-school students who were assigned to the learning laboratory for extra help said that staff were not always available for the skill areas in which they needed help.

2. In its self-assessment submitted before the onsite, the district rated academic, behavioral, and social emotional interventions and supports as "Somewhat Well" described by the indicator "The district utilizes summative and formative evaluation procedures to make decisions about student intervention/instruction using scientifically-validated assessments for screening, diagnostic and progress monitoring purposes. The district also rated evaluation of tiered systems of support as "Somewhat Well" described by the indicator "The school leadership team has a process to determine whether interventions are structured and assigned equitably. The team ensures that student outcomes are assessed and uses that data to determine whether initiatives and efforts are resulting in achievement gains."

Impact: Without a well-developed system of instructional supports, the district is not able to ensure that it is challenging and supporting all students to meet Massachusetts standards and sustaining students' academic growth.

Recommendation

1. **The district should develop and implement a continuum of K–12 tiered academic supports for its students. It should enhance the ability of teachers to deliver universally designed practices that meet the needs of diverse learners.**

   A. The district should ensure that educators have access to a complete and aligned curriculum that supports teachers to engage and challenge all learners.

B. The district should build teachers' capacity to analyze and use data to support and challenge all learners. (See the Assessment recommendation above.)

C. The district should design schedules and allocate resources to ensure that Tier 2 and 3 supplements but does not replace core instruction.

1. Interventions and remediation should take place during the school day whenever possible.

2. The district should seek to group students with similar needs so that interventions can be regularly scheduled using staff resources and instructional time more effectively.

3. The district should consider whether interventionists, special education teachers, and supervised instructional assistants can be scheduled concurrently to deliver needed services across classrooms for students with similar needs.

    a. For example, a student with disabilities and a general education student may both be scheduled for push-in remediation services in the same group along with others if their needs are similar. Instruction could be led by an interventionist, a special educator, or a supervised instructional aide, depending on the staff member's availability and ability to deliver the service.

Benefits: By implementing this recommendation, the district's teachers likely will provide classroom-based instruction and support for most learners. With a continuum of tiered academic supports, students' needs will likely be systematically addressed. By identifying and targeting specific groups of students, and designing a program-based delivery of supports, the district may more effectively sustain students' academic growth.

Recommended resources:

- The *Massachusetts Systems for Student Success (SfSS)* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfss/) is a blueprint for school improvement that focuses on systems, structures and supports across the district, school, and classroom to meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students. The SfSS website includes links to a self-assessment and a variety of helpful resources.

- The *Educator Effectiveness Guidebook for Inclusive Practice* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/) includes tools for districts, schools, and educators that are aligned to the MA Educator Evaluation Framework and promote evidence-based best practices for inclusion following the principles of Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning.

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

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from January 7–9, 2019, by the following team of independent DESE consultants.

1. Judith Evans, curriculum and instruction
2. Patricia Williams, curriculum and instruction
3. George Gearhart, assessment
4. Katherine Lopez-Natale, student support
5. Christine Brandt, *review team coordinator*

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: the vice-chair and four members.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers' association: the president, the vice-president, the secretary, and three building representatives.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction and the director of student services.

The team visited the following schools: Bresnahan (Pre-K–3), Molin Elementary (grades 4–5), Nock Middle School (grades 6–8), and Newburyport High School (grades 9–12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with students, students' families, and 5 principals, and focus groups with 30 elementary-school teachers, 9 middle-school teachers, and 11 high-school teachers.

The team observed 55 classes in the district: 26 at the high school, 14 at the middle school, and 15 at the 2 elementary schools.

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

- Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates.

- Data on the district's staffing and finances.
- Published educational reports on the district by ESE, and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).
- District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district's end-of-year financial reports.

Site Visit Schedule

Monday 01/07/2019	**Tuesday** 01/08/2019	**Wednesday** 01/09/2019
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff; document reviews; visits to Molin Elementary School and Newburyport High School for classroom observations; and teacher focus groups.	Interviews with district staff and principals; interview with teachers' association; teacher focus groups; students' families' focus groups; visits to Bresnahan Elementary School, Nock Middle School, and Newburyport High School for classroom observations and interviews with school committee members.	Interviews with school leaders; interviews with students, and visits to Bresnahan Elementary School, Molin Elementary School, Nock Middle School, and Newburyport High School for classroom observations.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures

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

Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American/Black	25	1.1%	86,305	9.0%
Asian	39	1.7%	65,667	6.9%
Hispanic	78	3.4%	191,201	20.0%
Native American	--	--	2,103	0.2%
White	2,084	91.8%	573,335	60.1%
Native Hawaiian	--	--	818	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	43	1.9%	34,605	3.6%
All	2,269	100.0%	954,034	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2017

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

Group	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	372	67.0%	16.2%	171,061	38.0%	17.7%
Econ. Dis.	225	40.5%	9.9%	305,203	67.9%	32.0%
EL and Former EL	28	5.0%	1.2%	97,334	21.6%	10.2%
All high needs students	555	100.0%	24.2%	449,584	100.0%	46.6%

Notes: As of October 1, 2017. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 2,294; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 964,806.

Table B2a: Newburyport Public Schools
Attendance Rates, 2015–2018

Group	N (2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change	State (2018)
African American/Black	27	94.9	92.5	95.9	94.4	-0.5	94.1
Asian	44	96.6	96.8	97.3	95.7	-0.9	96.2
Hispanic or Latino	93	92.5	91.5	92.3	91.1	-1.4	92.7
Multi-Race	47	95.0	94.2	95.1	95.6	0.6	94.4
White	2,114	95.9	96.0	95.9	95.9	0.0	95.1
High Needs	605	94.3	93.9	93.7	94.3	0.0	93.2
Econ. Dis.	261	92.9	92.3	92.1	93.0	0.1	92.5
SWD	399	94.8	94.2	94.1	94.6	-0.2	92.9
EL	37	91.2	93.2	93.8	92.3	1.1	93.3
All	2,326	95.8	95.8	95.8	95.7	-0.1	94.5

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

Table B2b: Newburyport Public Schools
Chronic Absence Rates,* 2015–2018

Group	N (2018)	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-yr Change	State (2018)
African American/Black	27	15.4	12.0	7.7	11.1	-4.3	16.4
Asian	44	2.3	4.8	2.4	9.1	6.8	7.6
Hispanic or Latino	93	20.3	23.0	25.0	30.1	9.8	22.5
Multi-Race	47	11.6	7.5	7.3	8.5	-3.1	14.2
White	2,114	6.4	6.1	6.3	5.9	-0.5	10.0
High Needs	605	17.0	15.3	16.2	15.0	-2.0	20.1
Econ. Dis.	261	24.6	25.9	27.1	21.8	-2.8	22.9
SWD	399	14.6	12.2	13.1	11.3	-3.3	20.7
EL	37	33.3	21.2	23.5	32.4	-0.9	20.4
All	2,326	6.9	6.7	6.9	7.1	0.2	13.2

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

Table B3: Newburyport Public Schools
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2016–2018

	FY16		FY17		FY18	
	Estimated	**Actual**	**Estimated**	**Actual**	**Estimated**	**Actual**
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	$26,412,981	$26,314,924	$27,402,232	$27,411,139	--	$28,616,563
By municipality	$11,153,288	$11,862,388	$12,424,901	$13,651,719	--	$11,420,491
Total from local appropriations	$37,566,269	$38,177,312	$39,827,133	$41,062,858	--	$40,080,335
From revolving funds and grants	--	$4,167,755	--	$3,759,913	--	$4,000,000
Total expenditures	--	$42,345,067	--	$44,822,771	--	$44,080,335
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	$3,720,117	--	$3,851,292	--	$3,923,142
Required local contribution	--	$19,326,232	--	$18,475,881	--	$18,688,498
Required net school spending**	--	$23,046,349	--	$22,327,173	--	$22,611,640
Actual net school spending	--	$33,155,611	--	$35,224,985	--	$36,652,627
Over/under required ($)	--	$10,109,262	--	$12,897,812	--	$14,040,987
Over/under required (%)	--	43.9%	--	57.8%	--	62.1%

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

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

Sources: FY16, FY17, and FY18 District End-of-Year Reports, Chapter 70 Program information on DESE website

Data retrieved 11/13/18 and 5/8/19

Table B4: Newburyport Public Schools
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2015–2017

Expenditure Category	2015	2016	2017
Administration	$413	$511	$407
Instructional leadership (district and school)	$1,015	$1,072	$1,160
Teachers	$5,992	$6,263	$6,476
Other teaching services	$888	$893	$1,104
Professional development	$150	$175	$201
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	$379	$285	$294
Guidance, counseling and testing services	$306	$368	$377
Pupil services	$1,142	$1,302	$1,303
Operations and maintenance	$876	$918	$962
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	$2,542	$2,972	$3,311
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	$13,702	$14,759	$15,595

Sources: Per-pupil expenditure reports on DESE website

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

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Focus Area #1: Learning Objectives & Expectations		Insufficient Evidence	Limited Evidence	Sufficient Evidence	Compelling Evidence	Avg Number of points
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1 to 4)
1. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter.	**ES**	0%	47%	20%	33%	2.9
	MS	0%	14%	50%	36%	3.2
	HS	8%	31%	42%	19%	2.7
	Total #	2	17	21	15	2.9
	Total %	4%	31%	38%	27%	
2. The teacher ensures that students understand what they should be learning in the lesson and why.	**ES**	7%	33%	47%	13%	2.7
	MS	0%	7%	57%	36%	3.3
	HS	8%	19%	62%	12%	2.8
	Total #	3	11	31	10	2.9
	Total %	5%	20%	56%	18%	
3. The teacher uses appropriate classroom activities well matched to the learning objective(s).	**ES**	0%	40%	27%	33%	2.9
	MS	0%	0%	64%	36%	3.4
	HS	8%	31%	23%	38%	2.9
	Total #	2	14	19	20	3.0
	Total %	4%	25%	35%	36%	
4. The teacher conducts frequent checks for student understanding, provides feedback, and adjusts instruction.	**ES**	0%	20%	47%	33%	3.1
	MS	0%	21%	50%	29%	3.1
	HS	4%	19%	77%	0%	2.7
	Total #	1	11	34	9	2.9
	Total %	2%	20%	62%	16%	
Total Score For Focus Area #1	**ES**					**11.6**
	MS					**12.9**
	HS					**11.2**
	Total					**11.7**

Focus Area #2: Student Engagement & Higher-Order Thinking		Insufficient Evidence	Limited Evidence	Sufficient Evidence	Compelling Evidence	Avg Number of points
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1 to 4)
5. Students assume responsibility to learn and are engaged in the lesson.	**ES**	7%	20%	60%	13%	2.8
	MS	0%	0%	86%	14%	3.1
	HS	0%	27%	38%	35%	3.1
	Total #	1	10	31	13	3.0
	Total %	2%	18%	56%	24%	
6. Students engage in higher-order thinking.	**ES**	7%	27%	53%	13%	2.7
	MS	0%	21%	79%	0%	2.8
	HS	4%	38%	42%	15%	2.7
	Total #	2	17	30	6	2.7
	Total %	4%	31%	55%	11%	
7. Students communicate their ideas and thinking with each other.	**ES**	0%	33%	47%	20%	2.9
	MS	7%	14%	57%	21%	2.9
	HS	8%	42%	38%	12%	2.5
	Total #	3	18	25	9	2.7
	Total %	5%	33%	45%	16%	
8. Students engage with meaningful, real-world tasks.	**ES**	13%	13%	53%	20%	2.8
	MS	0%	7%	50%	43%	3.4
	HS	8%	46%	23%	23%	2.6
	Total #	4	15	21	15	2.9
	Total %	7%	27%	38%	27%	
Total Score For Focus Area #2	**ES**	4%	38%	42%	15%	**11.2**
	MS	2	17	30	6	**12.2**
	HS	4%	31%	55%	11%	**10.9**

Focus Area #3: Inclusive Practice & Classroom Culture		Insufficient Evidence	Limited Evidence	Sufficient Evidence	Compelling Evidence	Avg Number of points
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1 to 4)
9. The teacher ensures that students are engaging in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs.	**ES**	0%	40%	40%	20%	2.8
	MS	0%	14%	57%	29%	3.1
	HS	8%	58%	27%	8%	2.3
	Total #	2	23	21	9	2.7
	Total %	4%	42%	38%	16%	
10. The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies.	**ES**	7%	27%	60%	7%	2.7
	MS	0%	21%	50%	29%	3.1
	HS	8%	65%	27%	0%	2.2
	Total #	3	24	23	5	2.5
	Total %	5%	44%	42%	9%	
11. Classroom routines and positive supports are in place to ensure that students behave appropriately.	**ES**	0%	7%	53%	40%	3.3
	MS	0%	0%	43%	57%	3.6
	HS	0%	15%	38%	46%	3.3
	Total #	0	5	24	26	3.4
	Total %	0%	9%	44%	47%	
12. The classroom climate is conducive to teaching and learning.	**ES**	0%	13%	40%	47%	3.3
	MS	0%	7%	43%	50%	3.4
	HS	4%	12%	46%	38%	3.2
	Total #	1	6	24	24	3.3
	Total %	2%	11%	44%	44%	
Total Score For Focus Area #3	**ES**	0%	40%	40%	20%	**12.1**
	MS	0%	14%	57%	29%	**13.2**
	HS	8%	58%	27%	8%	**11.0**
	Total	2	23	21	9	**11.9**