

Westwood Public Schools Student Opportunity Act Plan

Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

Which student subgroups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?

As noted in the WPS Strategy for District Improvement, the district is committed to improved student reading and writing outcomes, with a particular focus on ELA at the middle school level. The district is just concluding an ELA curriculum review process and will focus in FY'21 on implementing the recommendations from the curriculum review.

In particular, the District's MCAS data analysis over the last 3 years has identified a persistent and significant gap in performance between students with disabilities and non-disabled students in English Language Arts. This gap is most pronounced at the middle school in grades 7 and 8.

As an illustration of this gap in achievement, on the 2019 grade 8 ELA MCAS, 31% of students in Westwood were identified as partially meeting expectations and 4% as not meeting expectations. By comparison, 65% of Westwood's students with disabilities in Grade 8 were identified as partially meeting expectations on the ELA MCAS assessment. An additional 19% of students with disabilities were identified as not meeting expectations.

We are committed to working to close the achievement gap for this student subgroup using intentional, evidence-based strategies.

Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps

What evidence-based programs will your district adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will you allocate to these programs?

The District is choosing to invest these funds into professional staffing (2.0 FTE of new Literacy Specialist services) which are specifically targeted to the middle school level. This staffing will be augmented by additional resources for assessment and intervention for identified students. Ongoing data-based progress monitoring via the STAR assessment will be incorporated into the Literacy Specialists' work with General Education and Special Education teaching staff to target and refine instruction for Student with Disabilities. In addition, the district is investing in curriculum leadership at the middle school with a .4 FTE ELA Department Head who will oversee the alignment of ELA curriculum and provide professional development and instructional coaching to teachers.

FY'21 budget item	Amount	Foundation category
2.0 FTE Literacy Specialists	\$152,000	Classroom & Specialist Teachers
.4 FTE ELA Department Head	\$ 40,000	Instructional Leadership
Evidence-based program identified by DESE	Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities; Supporting educators to implement high-quality aligned curriculum	
SOA program categories:	D (hiring school personnel) and E (Increased or improved professional development)	

Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets

What metrics will your district use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups? Select from the list of DESE metrics or provide your own. (Please note that targets will be added to this section once SY 2020 data is released this fall.)

- 1) DESE outcome metrics:
 - English Language Arts (ELA) achievement
 - ELA mean student growth percentiles (SGP)

- 2) Custom district outcome metrics:
 - STAR Reading Assessment data

Commitment 4: Engaging All Families

How will your district ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the district regarding their students' needs?

The Westwood Public Schools recognizes that family engagement is critical to ensuring successful outcomes for all students and is committed to partnering with our parent community. Given that our focus subgroup is students with disabilities, it is particularly important that we find ways to engage with parents of students with disabilities.

For this reason, the District is committed to collaborating with the Westwood Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) to ensure ongoing dialogue about the needs of students with disabilities and the District's efforts to ensure their success. We will assist the SEPAC with programming for parents, ensuring district representation at SEPAC meetings, and continue outreach efforts. We will work with the SEPAC to ensure parent representation on school Site

Councils and the Superintendent's quarterly meetings with PTO leaders. We will continue to review survey data from parents of students with disabilities regarding the TEAM process. In addition, this year the District is engaged in Tiered Focus Monitoring from the Program Quality Assurance division of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education which includes parent input surveys and in person interviews with SEPAC leadership. We will carefully consider the findings of this process to identify areas for improvement.

Finally, the District will engage with the SEPAC on the specific topic of student achievement and literacy development by providing data presentations and opportunities for parent input and Q and A at each of the upcoming SEPAC meetings.

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