



School Committee Office of Academics

Eileen de los Reyes

Deputy Superintendent Academics
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Thematic Category

Aspirations

Priority Area

1 Improved student outcomes: BPS will graduate all students as life-long learners and engaged global citizens, well-prepared for post-secondary pathways.

2 Improved school quality: BPS will be a district of all high-performing schools, eliminating both the opportunity gap and the achievement gap.

3 Strong district leadership/high-quality, action-oriented teachers & staff: BPS will recruit, hire, develop, support, and retain highly effective, culturally proficient school and district leaders, teachers, and staff who are held accountable for improving student outcomes.

4 Effective resource allocation: BPS will make effective and equitable use of all available resources.

5 Greater community engagement: BPS will strengthen student, family, and community investment to enable student success.

1. BPS will provide rigorous, effective, and engaging curriculum, instruction, and enrichment. Special focus will be given to the following areas:
 - a) Literacy and numeracy¹, particularly in early and transition years, to build a strong foundation for academic success across all subject areas and across all grades.
 - b) College readiness and/or career preparedness.
2. BPS will continue to foster an environment of high expectations combined with targeted interventions and support in order to meet the learning needs of all students.
3. BPS will provide equitable access to quality facilities and highly effective programs.
4. BPS will implement strategies to ensure every school will have highly effective school leaders, teachers, and staff. The workforce will reflect the rich diversity of the students BPS serves.
5. BPS will continue to increase school autonomy and support to schools while also strengthening clear systems of accountability for both central office and schools.
6. BPS will empower, support, and hold accountable school leaders, teachers, and staff to effectively engage with families, partners, and the community to foster shared responsibility for student achievement.



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The Office of Academics prides itself on:

Incorporating a data-driven approach

- Use quantitative and qualitative data to identify and resolve instructional problems

Establishing a school support and accountability structure

- Align resources and supports in a collaborative approach that is appropriate for all schools in the BPS portfolio

Building principal capacity to focus on instruction

- Leverage the Network structure and refocusing Central Office supports and services on instruction

Developing a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction in K2-5

- Developing Focus on K2 in house, partnering with HGSE to develop curricula for grades 1-2, and piloting Expeditionary Learning in grades 3-5 in 30 schools

Developing intervention strategies

- Establishing Academic Response Teams serve as a cross-content team supporting school-wide transformation

Developing and sustaining collaborative relationship with DESE

- Providing intensive support of Level 4 and high needs schools

Developing network of advisory boards

- Establishing new working coalitions with students and principals through advisory boards

Reducing district dropout rates and increasing graduation rates

- Reducing dropout rate from 6.4% to 3.8% - the lowest in BPS history and Increased 4-year graduation rate from 64.4% to 66.7%

Strategy to turnaround schools and interrupt pipeline of Level 4 schools

Tiered Supports and Interventions

Transforming

Target: Level 4 & 5 schools, and Level 3 schools where outcomes are stagnant (2 years) and their performance is beneath the 10th percentile of comparable schools in MA.

Goal: Support and intervene if necessary as in-district receiver with the capacity to transform the school

Improving

Target: Schools where there is evidence of progress but improvements have not been enough to move school to a higher level and performance. Schools are between the 10th - 25th percentile of comparable schools in MA

Goal: Support schools in strengthening and/or identifying new organizational and instructional practices and interventions to accelerate progress

Sustaining

Target: High-performing schools, Level 1 and Level 2 schools that are between the 26th - 99th percentile of comparable schools in MA

Goal: Sustain organizational and instructional practices and interventions that help move the school to a higher level; remain vigilant that unanticipated internal or external actions do not derail school's performance

Note: Level of intervention will be informed by the internal measures as well as DESE Level designations



School Tiers by Network

Transforming (40 Schools)	Improving (37 Schools)	Sustaining (32 Schools)
A: 0 Schools	A: 7 Schools	A: 6 Schools
B: 6 Schools	B: 3 Schools	B: 3 Schools
C: 7 Schools	C: 4 Schools	C: 3 Schools
D: 4 Schools	D: 8 Schools	D: 2 Schools
E: 6 Schools	E: 3 Schools	E: 7 Schools
F: 5 Schools	F: 3 Schools	F: 4 Schools
G: 11 Schools	G: 9 Schools	G: 7 Schools

There are also 13 schools that do not have accountability data, including Early Education programs, alternative schools, and newer schools (less than 4 years of data).

Tiered Structure of Supports

- Baseline support to 100% of school in the BPS
- Differentiated approach to specific schools needs
- Strategic initiatives at the Network Level guided by data findings and principal input

Transforming Schools

Baseline Support:

Curriculum guidance and PD, DNA, OL, Social Worker, Liaisons

School Quality Reviews (SQR)

School Audits

Academic Response Teams (ART)

TNTP Pilot in Networks B and C

Compliance support to Level 4 and other DESE designated schools:

Improving Schools

Baseline Support:

Curriculum guidance and PD, DNA, OL, Social Worker, Liaisons

SQR + School Audits with focus on identifying what is preventing the schools from achieving outcomes

Sustaining Schools

Baseline Support:

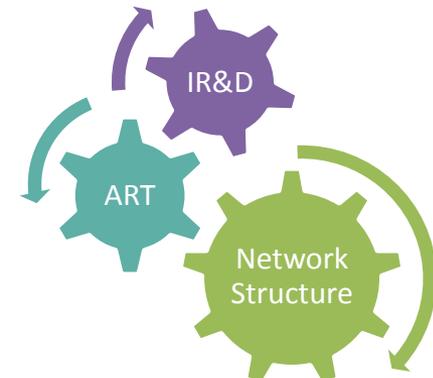
Curriculum guidance and PD, DNA, OL, Social Worker, Liaisons

100% of students succeed

and

we eliminate achievement gap

The Network Structure, IR&D and ART teams work together to provide a tiered structure of supports to schools



Theory of Action: Focus on Instruction

We believe that:

If we **develop a vision of excellent instruction**, and

If we **align district priorities and goals** to the vision, and

If the central team **aligns its systems and policies** to the vision, and

If we **develop and empower strong network instructional leaders**,
and

If we support instructional leaders in **schools with the highest contribution to the achievement gap**,

Then we will enable great teaching of rigorous content and **ensure that all students receive an excellent education that prepares them for success in college and career.**

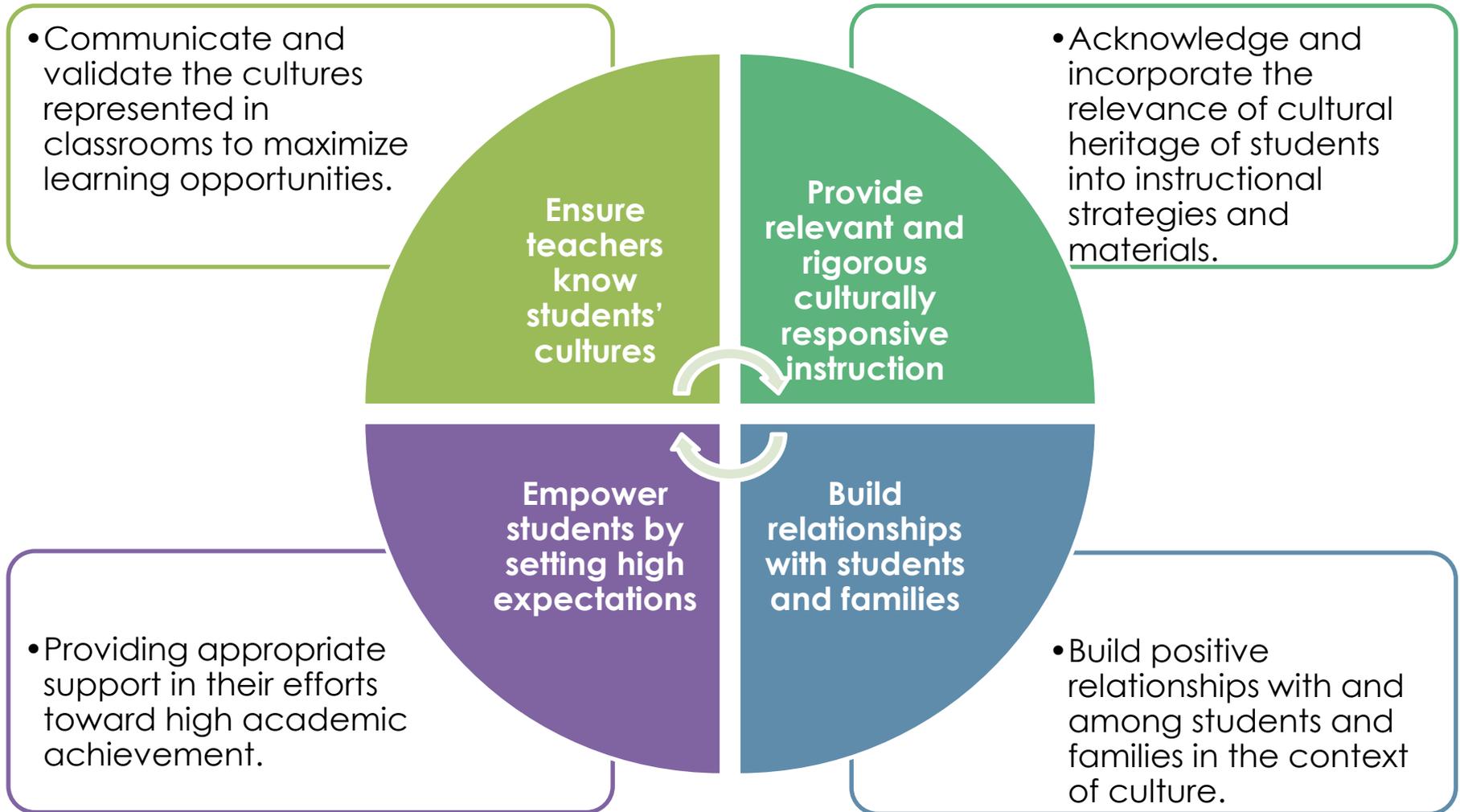
Vision of Excellent Instruction

Consultation with stakeholders

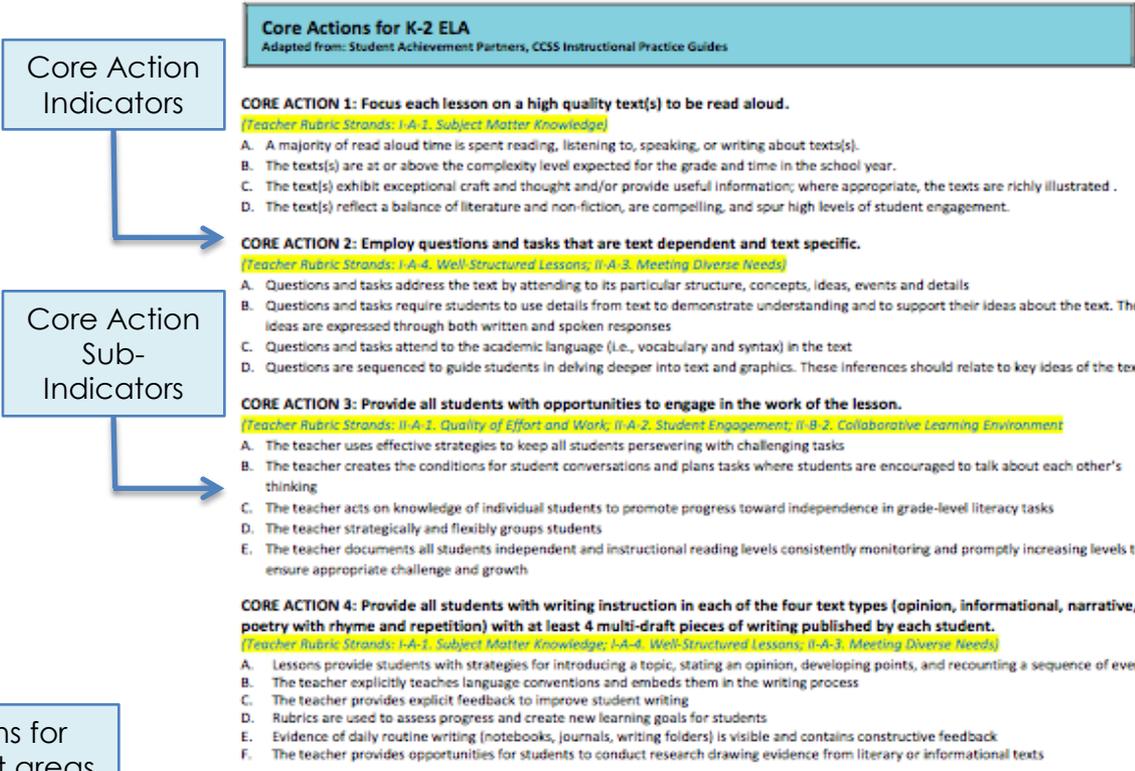
In excellent classrooms, where teachers are providing relevant and culturally responsive opportunities for students to be validated and affirmed Boston Public School students are:

- 1** Fully engaged in the work of the lesson from start to finish
- 2** Working with the major work of the subject and grade at the appropriate level of rigor demanded by the standards
- 3** Responsible for doing the thinking in the classroom
- 4** Demonstrating their understanding

Essential Characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching



Core Actions: Disseminated



Alignment to Evaluation Rubric

Core Actions for other content areas specifically identify the importance of disciplinary literacy; it is an expectation in ELA/Literacy.

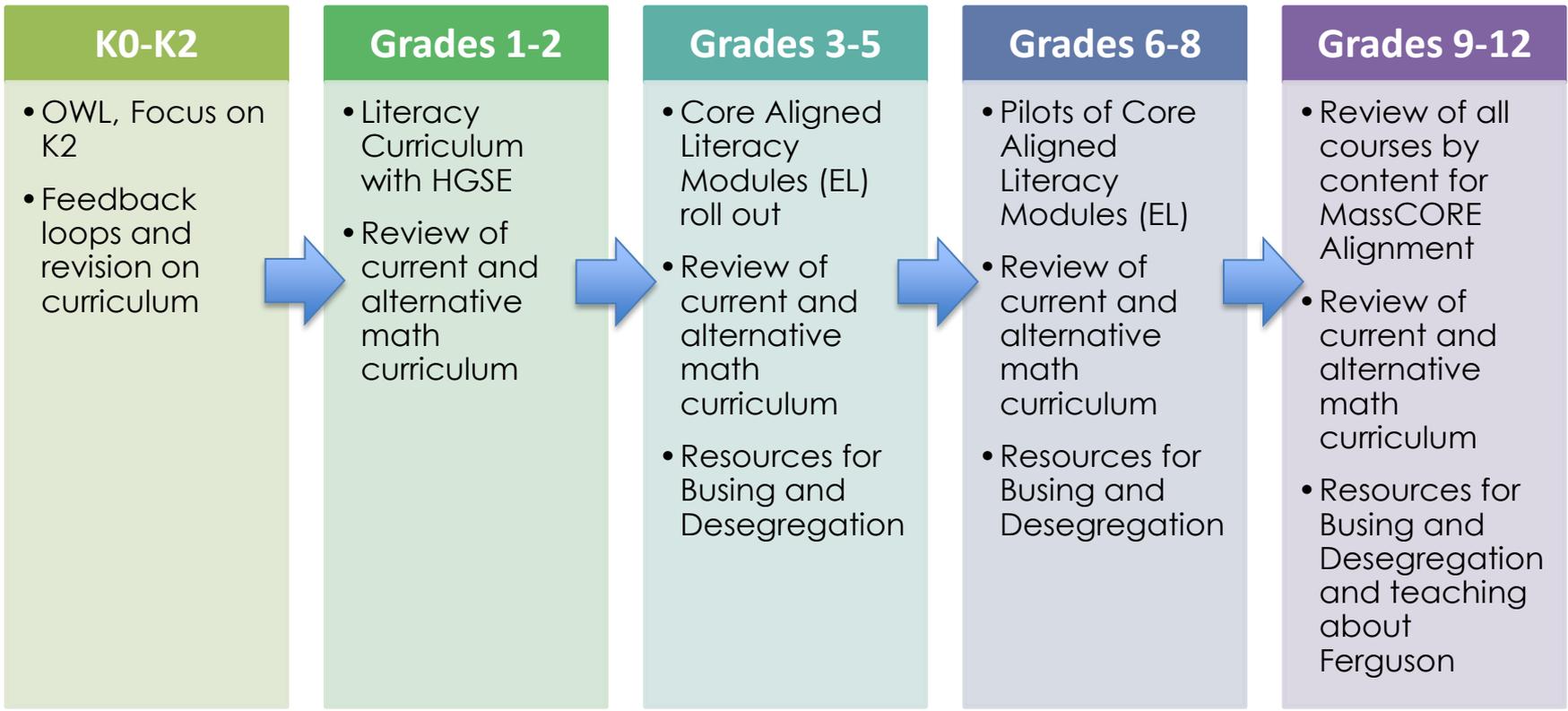
Scaffolds and Supports for English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities
Adapted from Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)

Provide opportunities for students to process and produce language at the discourse, sentence, and word/phrase level.	Include sensory, graphic and/or interactive instructional supports (e.g., digital media, graphic organizers, word walls, and anchor charts).	Explicitly link prior learning and new concepts (e.g., through complex text, critical reading discussion, guided reading including comprehension, and digital media, etc.).
Use WIDA standards and integrate language domains (e.g., reading, writing, speaking, and listening) to develop language targets and objectives that are appropriate for students' language proficiency and instructional levels.	Enable rigorous evidence-based discussions and engagement by providing language structures (e.g., sentence stems) and using protocols (e.g., turn-and-talks, retelling, summarizing and synthesizing the main points, and collaborative learning structures).	Explicitly teach relevant Tier 2 vocabulary words to build the academic language necessary for students to read, write, and/or discuss texts and tasks. Tier 3 vocabulary should be embedded within the context of the lesson rather than at the start of the lesson.
Model annotation (e.g., through shared and interactive reading and writing) of high-quality grade level text at the word, phrase, or sentence level.	Create authentic and meaningful assessments in conjunction with timely and targeted feedback on a consistent basis.	Select an essential complex aspect of the text in which to delve deeper (e.g., close read) with questioning and academic language instruction.

Scaffolds and Supports: UDL and WIDA

Instructional Research and Development

Strengthening the curriculum across grades

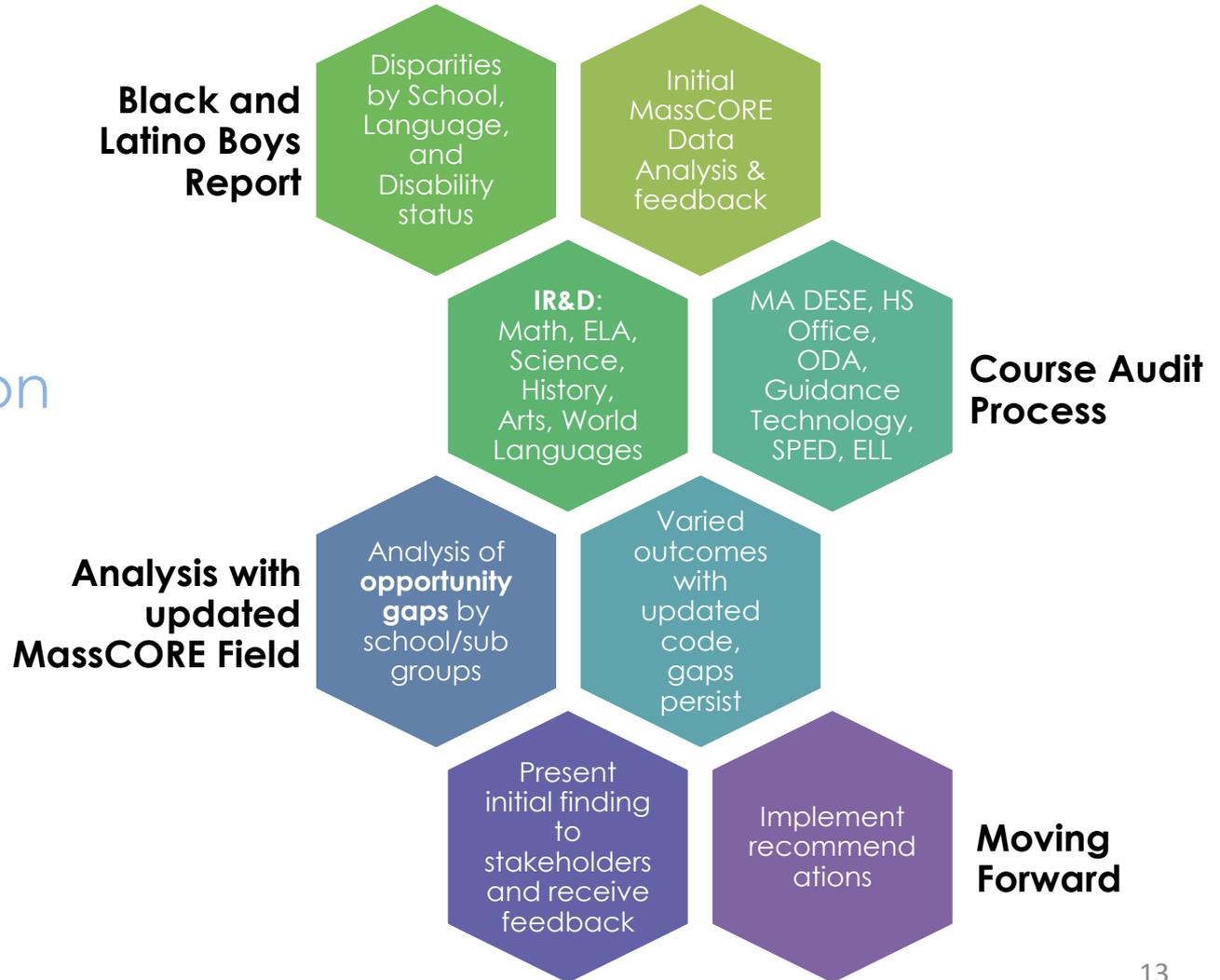


Instructional Research and Development

High School Initiatives: MassCORE Alignment

Process:

- i. Investigation
- ii. Consultation
- iii. Implementation



Instructional Research and Development

Improving MassCORE Attainment: Next Steps

Validate new MassCORE field with schools

- Complete consultation with high schools
- Re-confirm findings of initial analysis with final MassCORE catalogue
- Conduct additional analysis based on new findings

Craft plan for support of students struggling to meet MassCORE

- Provide students and families with guidance (in person and online) on their progress to meeting graduation and college readiness requirements
- Enlist community partners to help address gaps and inequitable opportunities
- Coordinate high level interdisciplinary team tasked with ensuring BPS students are prepared and able to meet MassCORE requirements

Implement phased process to improve MassCORE Access and Achievement

- Conduct qualitative review of courses across schools
- Set targets by school and subgroup
- Establish accountability mechanism for multiple years improvement

Academic Response Teams (ART)

Strategic Initiatives

Consistent implementation of the Core Actions across schools identified as Transforming to improve student achievement, increasing Student Growth and school CPI

Increasing the professional capital of the staff in Turnaround and Transforming schools to develop and strengthen systems, structures, and protocols for data driven teacher collaboration that continuously examines instruction and ensures high student performance

Strategic use of resources to provide out of school time learning and enrichment to eliminate the achievement and opportunity gap in our schools

Deploy three teams of experienced educators to 19 schools to provide support across content areas and grade levels over an 8-week period



Network Structure: Role and Purpose

The purpose of the **Network Structure** is to leverage central office academics and operations to support the improvement of instructional leadership and instruction in ALL schools.

The **Network Superintendent** develops and leads a highly effective network organization that fully leverages district resources to: build the capacity of the school leader as an instructional leader; increase his/her ability to effectively manage school-based operations; develop and nurture culturally proficient, professional school cultures; and to develop strong partnerships with families and communities, as informed and differentiated by the needs of individual school communities, for the ultimate goal of student achievement.

Network Structure Accomplishments

over the past 3 years

- Developed systems and structures for strengthening instructional leadership of principals
- Designed rigorous four-phased principal selection process
- Led high-quality principal PD that focuses on topics related to district priorities that was consistent across all networks
- Created a shared and consistent process for instructional practices observations in schools and providing feedback to principals and instructional staff regularly
- In collaboration with ODA and IR&D, developed a new assessment system that includes predictive, paced interims, unit and end-of-year assessments, among others



5. Appendix



Network A - Strategic Initiatives

1. Rigorous Implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF):

Since February of 2014, Network A has had a strong focus on training principals and teachers leaders on the shifts in the MCF and core actions to guide instruction. 5 schools are implementing the Core Aligned Literacy Modules (CALM) (Gr. 3-5) and Foundations (K2- Gr.2). Network focus on early grades: network wide adoption of the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment(BAS) to assess and track reading levels in grades K2 to 2. Several schools are using BAS up to grade 5.

2. Eliminating Achievement and Opportunity Gaps:

Data cycles in network focus on students with disabilities and English language learners. This has supported Tier II interventions at the classroom level. 5 Schools in the network will be planning for Extended Learning Time to increase instructional time as well as enriching opportunities for all students in the network. Roll out of Inclusion Expansion initiative in the network will greatly benefit students with disabilities, which is the lowest performing subgroup in the network.

3. Increasing Inclusive Practices:

Due to strong instructional practices and structures, Network A was selected by the Special Education department for the Inclusion Expansion initiative for almost all schools in the network for SY 2015-2016. This initiative will include UDL Academy PD to start in the spring of 2015 with continuation through the summer and fall of 2015.

Network B - Strategic Initiatives

1. Rigorous Implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF)

Building our principals' facilitative/executive leadership capacity and improving the quality of ILT/school-based meetings and professional development while simultaneously building systems and structures for communication, collaboration, support, and accountability (i.e., a formal request system, strong network-level teams, website and regular data updates.)-All Schools

2. Eliminating Achievement and Opportunity Gaps:

- Intensive support for schools below the 5th percentile. Leveraging all network liaisons to provide level 1, level 2, and level 3 tiered supports. (RTI)[Winthrop, Higginson-Lewis, Mendell, Timilty, and King Schools].
- Develop and monitor turnaround plan for Level 4 School. Provide comprehensive support to School during period of turnaround (Winthrop).
- Provide strategic support to schools after exiting turnaround status to sustain academic improvements and structural changes (Trotter, Orchard Gardens).

3. Increasing Inclusive Practices:

Building capacity for all school leaders (including lead teachers) in the UDL principles and Common Core Shifts (Engagement in SY 2015) at Network PD. –All Schools

Network C- Strategic Initiatives

1. Rigorous Implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF):

At the school level, analyze grade level performance to determine the varied needs of each grade level and/or classroom with resulting implementation of targeted, innovative, inclusive practices through professional development. In collaboration with all academic departments develop specific school-based approaches to address the variable needs of each school, program, grade level and classroom.

2. Eliminating Achievement and Opportunity Gaps:

Continue our work to eliminate the opportunity and achievement gaps of all students, with emphasis on Boys of Color and students with disabilities, through effective use of data cycles, assessment practices, action planning, and growth monitoring. The initial work with individual schools and programs combined with ongoing research will inform Network-wide best practices and efficient utilization of District and Network support systems. Findings will be shared amongst the Networks.

3. Increasing Inclusive Practices:

A significant achievement gap in Network C is with students with disabilities. We will evaluate our current practices to formulate a deeper understanding of the causes and develop appropriate and effective academic and socio-emotional supports. In partnership with the SPED department, we will redevelop service delivery practices and efficiently reorganize program placement within the Network.

Network D- Strategic Initiatives

1. Rigorous Implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF):

Building capacity for all school leaders (including lead teachers) in the CORE Actions at monthly PD Sessions. In addition to collaboration across network- A team of Network D Schools will pilot the CALM units and the Engage NY- Edison K-8 as the lab site and the Tobin, Jackson Mann, Curley, Winship, Hennigan, GPA, and Curley. Learning walks and monitoring visits will be held at all schools

2. Eliminating Achievement and Opportunity Gaps:

Build capacity **for all** school leaders (including young men's leadership program coordinators) in the Cultural Responsive Instruction model- Gloria Ladson Billings. The principal training will be incorporated into the UDL- engagement training, while the Coordinators will participate in a year long in depth study group. Learning walks and monitoring visits will be held at all schools.

3. Increasing Inclusive Practices:

Building capacity for all school leaders (including lead teachers) in the UDL principles (Engagement in SY 2015) at Network PD. 3 Network D Schools will be supported by Harvard University's Tom Hehir to serve as lab sites- Lyons K-8, Manning K-8, and Hennigan K-6 School. Deb Rooney- principal of the Lyons, Carroll Blake for Office of Achievement Gap, and Hillary Shea will support the network's development in this area. Learning walks and monitoring visits will be held at all schools



Network E- Strategic Initiatives

1. Rigorous Implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF):

Improving Common Core Aligned Instruction through expanding opportunities to engage with curriculum resources (Foundations for early Literacy, Core Aligned Literacy Modules (CALM) for Grades 3-5, and Connected Mathematics Project 3 (CMP3) for middle school math) and providing additional professional development for Network E teachers to support curriculum implementation. We will build capacity for all school leaders (including lead teachers) in the CORE Actions to support instruction improvement.

2. Building Capacity for Data Inquiry:

Build the capacity of all Network-E Schools to implement Data Inquiry Cycles and high functioning Instructional Leadership Teams by leveraging the supports and resources from Anet, the Office of Accountability & Data, the Network-E Liaisons, the Director of Network Academics and the Network Superintendent.

3. Increasing Inclusive Practices & Eliminate Achievement Gaps:

Principals and lead teachers will participate in Professional Learning Communities to extend learning and build capacity across Network E schools. Through PLCs, they will identify the opportunity gaps in their schools and support each other in the development of professional practices that can improve student learning for all, and specifically subgroups. Through research, action planning, focused cross site visits, and progress monitoring of implementation of identified strategies and professional practices, Network E principals and teacher leaders will work together to eliminate opportunity gaps. To support teacher leadership of Professional Learning Communities, Network E also funds scholarships to teacher leadership courses such as Using Data, Supporting Instruction, Professional Expertise, and Shared Leadership.

Network F- Strategic Initiatives

1. Rigorous Implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF):

Five schools in the network are implementing the district sponsored initiative *Focus on Core*. In addition, three schools are implementing a Transforming Literacy Project proposal with the Conservatory Lab Charter School through the charter school dissemination grant.

2. 8th grade math:

The 8th grade math proficiency rates in the network are significantly lower than other grade levels and lower than other networks. In response, 8th grade students in five schools are receiving double doses of mathematics instruction: access to the 8th grade math curriculum and access to an Algebra 1 course cost-shared by schools in the network or a second block of math interventions.

3. Carnegie Math interventions:

Network Superintendent has purchased 1,100 MATHia licenses for students in grades 3-8 across the network. MATHia is a personalized learning software that builds on learning tasks with unique tools that differentiate instruction for each student. A process has been built in to assess effectiveness and to meet with representatives to respond to specific Network F needs.



Network G- High School Strategic Initiatives

- **Achievement Gap:** address through student support addressing attendance and suspension, increase graduation and decrease dropout through support models, and continued alignment to Common Core and specialized programming
- **Increase Graduation:**
 - 2013 – 65.9%
 - 2014 – 66.7%
- **Decreased Dropout:**
 - **2012** – 6.4%
 - **2013** – 4.5%
 - **2014** – 3.8%
- **Professional development:** Affinity Groups, ULD/Landmark, IR&D Common Core in Content
- **Common Core:** Math realignment – PD for network teachers and HM
- **Master Scheduling:** resources to assist schools to design scheduling to meet compliance issues and offer students classes and social/emotional time for greatest impact on academics
- **MCAS Boot Camps:** twenty hours of content instruction (math, ELA, physics, biology) leading up to content tests
- **College Readiness:** FASFA forms, reduce remediation classes, increase college graduation
- **Blended Learning:** Rising grade 9 programming, credit recovery
- **Ed Options:** offer additional spaces, redesign funding formula, streamline intake process

MassCore

Massachusetts High School Program of Studies

English/Language Arts	4 Units*
Mathematics	4 Units Including the completion of Algebra II or completion of the Integrated Math equivalent. All students are recommended to take a math course during their senior year.
Science	3 Units of lab-based science Coursework taken in technology/engineering may count for MassCore science credit. Note: In June 2012, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE) revised its admission standards to count technology/engineering coursework based on academic standards and taken for science credit as meeting the science admissions requirement.
History/Social Science	3 Units Including US History and World History.
Foreign Language**	2 Units Of the same language.
Physical Education	As required by law State law (M.G.L. c. 71,s. 3) states: "Physical education shall be taught as a required subject in all grades for all students." Health can be integrated into Physical Education, science, or taught as a stand-alone course.
The Arts**	1 Unit
Additional Core Courses	5 Units Business Education, Career and Technical Education (CTE), Health, Technology or any of the subjects above. Note: Most students majoring in CTE will take more than 5 units in a CTE program of study.
	22 Units - Is a minimum that students should take in high school
Additional Learning Opportunities	Complete as many of the following as possible: Advanced Placement (AP); Capstone or Senior Project; Dual Enrollment courses taken for both high school and college credit; Online courses; Service Learning; and Work-based Learning.

*A unit represents a full academic year of study or its equivalent in a subject that covers all the standards contained in a specific Curriculum Framework.

** Students enrolled in a state-approved Career and Technical Education program of studies have the option of opting out of Foreign Language and Art and still fulfill MassCore.

MassCore is the recommended program of study that Massachusetts high school students need in order to be better prepared for college and a career. Developed by a statewide advisory group from the K-12, higher education and business sectors, MassCore maintains flexibility for students and high schools while allowing districts to set additional graduation requirements. Courses included in MassCore should be rigorous, engaging, and based on appropriate Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks high school level standards.