

State of the Schools
Addressing Goals
for
The Lynn Public Schools

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State of the Schools: Addressing Goals

Again this year I will brief you, the Lynn School Committee as well as the citizens of the City of Lynn on the state of the Lynn Public Schools. As I begin my fourth year as superintendent, I am proud of what the truly outstanding educators with whom I work and I have accomplished. For the past three years, I have provided you with a list of goals or priorities (attached) which have served to narrow my focus in spite of reductions in resources and increases in enrollment. I continue to use my list to serve as a reference, and you will find that my narrative addresses each item in turn. As we go into the next year, I look forward to the superintendent evaluation process outlined in the new Educator Evaluation System from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE). I presented that to you in January. This process will allow us all to prepare new goals together, goals that will guide the Lynn Public Schools into the next year and beyond.

1. Emphasize and support standards-based instruction for all grades and all content areas.

- **Expand departmentalized instruction in grades 3, 4, and 5.**

As part of the Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative, over the course of the next two years the state is moving to Common Core Standards. The district continues to follow the state timeline for transitioning to this Common Core Curriculum. During the summer of 2012, we will begin to work with teams of teacher leaders to develop a plan for building-based professional development on the Common Core. Under the direction of our curriculum team, committees have been established to align our local curriculum documents with the new Massachusetts Frameworks. Along with a transition to the Common Core standards, the high schools are in the process of transitioning to the MassCore curriculum requirements that are also part of the state's RTTT initiative. We will be providing more information in coming months about the MassCore.

Elementary principals continue to implement and evaluate departmentalized instruction in grades 3, 4, and 5. Some schools have determined that departmentalized instruction works best in grade 5 only, some in grades 4 and 5 and some in grades 3, 4, and 5. These determinations are based on student population, number of teachers per grade, and staffing strengths and weaknesses. Whether departmentalized instruction is an emphasis in one school or not, there is emphasis in all schools on collaborative lesson planning.

- **Purchase and dispense remediation software.**

As a district, we continue to evaluate software purchases and identify additional remedial software needed to meet student learning needs. Preliminary data indicate that READ 180, Imagine Learning and Success Maker along with the Response to Intervention (RTI) model for instruction are positively impacting student learning. APEX for credit recovery provides another opportunity for high school students to recover credit. This gives hope for completing high school credit requirements in time to graduate to students with excessive absences and/or course failure. The district is now exploring the use of tablets to bring these remediative programs to "off-site" locations as well as to make more mobile use of the programs for students inside the school.

Scholastic Read 180 and System 44 Programs are now fully implemented as the core reading programs in special education classrooms across all of our middle Schools. Generating up to the minute data, daily software usage incorporates high interest fiction/ nonfiction books and state of the art teaching materials. The Imagine Learning program has expanded to 11 elementary schools and is providing supplemental language and literacy support to Tier III students who struggle in acquiring these skills

- **Initiate Response to Intervention programs for both social and academic student improvement.**

Funds from the ESE have allowed us to begin the planning of the Wraparound Zone Initiative. The term "wraparound" refers to supports that are in place for all students' emotional and social growth, as well as

the interventions that will be used for students who are struggling in these important areas. The planning committee has been attending ESE sponsored workshops/meetings, collecting data, and identifying resources, and will be ready to submit an implementation plan to ESE in April. Although only four schools in the district were involved in the planning, all schools will be impacted by this initiative. A Program Specialist for the Wraparound Zone Initiative will be hired this month.

Extensive professional development was provided to elementary and middle school teachers last summer. All elementary and middle schools continue to work towards the implementation of the RTI model of instruction which is at the core of our district's improvement plan. Common planning time in the elementary schools and cluster meeting time at the middle schools are devoted to looking at student work and assessment data to plan instruction.

- **Initiate Learning and Leadership program for middle school students in STEM subjects.**

Our Leading and Learning Program (LLP) at Endicott College continues this summer for its third year. This program provides supplemental opportunity for our gifted and talented students. This year we plan to invite students who have finished seventh grade and will be entering eighth. This will allow students to return to their middle schools and use their leadership and STEM skills to influence other middle school students in a positive manner.

In addition to the Leadership and Learning Program, twenty-five middle school girls from our three middle schools were selected to participate in a program at MIT last summer. Funded and sponsored by GE, this project focuses on motivating our young women to become interested in and to pursue careers in STEM areas. We look forward to another cohort of girls to attend this program during summer 2012.

This summer we hope to continue with a summer experience for middle school students similar to last year's Camp Explore. The program will continue to focus on academic enrichment, career and college awareness, vocational and technical opportunities, and recreational/wellness activities for many of our incoming seventh, eighth and ninth graders. Teachers who have yet to participate will have the opportunity to engage in a clinical form of professional development that has been very promising and is a continuation from last year's summer program where 80% of our middle school teachers received training in power strategies for teaching.

- **Continue to support ELL programs for ELL students at all levels.**

We have implemented new initiatives to increase academic achievement aimed at supporting English Language Learners (ELL), refugee and immigrant students. The district has partnered with the New American Center to provide assistance to refugee and immigrant families, and we are in the process of launching an extended school and summer program. The new program will focus on academics for students in kindergarten through grade twelve and intense school readiness for new arrivals. Last spring an adult program for ESL, literacy and computer instruction was created for parents and has been located at LVTI. That program also had a literacy component for the pre-school children of the participating adults. We have also continued classes at the Lynn Evening Enrichment Program (LEEP) for young adults between sixteen and twenty who enter our schools with little or no formal education. And, for the third year in a row, we have expanded our number of elementary English as a Second Language (ESL) Specialists to eighteen, to increase delivery of direct instruction to our ELLs.

Increased participation in professional development in the pedagogy of teaching ELLs is confirmation of our faculty's commitment to the quality of education for our population. Since June 2010, the number of faculty members who have completed ESE's mandated Sheltered English Immersion Professional Development has increased from 82 in 2009-2010 to 246 now. Classes are often at capacity and waiting lists show the high demand for this training.

The district's mission and dedication to increase academic achievement for English language learners was recognized in June 2011 when Classical High School was honored during the World Refugee Day celebration at the Massachusetts State House. The School was praised for its commitment to the academic success and integration of our refugee population.

Policies and practices regarding the education of ELLs are governed by a variety of legislative acts, hence additional funds and resources are necessary to meet the needs of this population. The district continues to be challenged by students entering with little or no proficiency in English, with little or no formal education, with serious attendance issues centered on cultural misunderstandings of our country's educational system and with plans to drop-out after receiving rudimentary English instruction.

2. Emphasize and support data-driven decision-making.

- **Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on using data to improve instruction.**

Our teachers and administrators have become increasingly adept at using student achievement data and other sources of information about students to improve their instruction and the students' understanding of the standards they need to learn. District assessments provide further information to teachers about how their students are faring, and assessments that are administered across all high schools in the district have department heads now meeting to discuss the teaching strategies and approaches that have been most effective at their individual schools. While our high schools have always excelled in their own right, the level of cooperation among them has never been more pronounced.

Data teams at each school continue to meet to review school data to identify what programs and initiatives are working and to identify areas of strength and weakness. This information is used to write the school improvement plans. Most importantly, time is provided during the school day for teams of teachers to review classroom summative and formative assessment data. Reviewing these data in teams affords teachers the opportunity to work collaboratively to develop lessons that meet the needs of all learners. School and district leaders along with teachers continue to use TestWiz to examine results from MCAS, district assessments and teacher made formative assessment.

Over the past year, ESE has collected more data about districts across the commonwealth. SIMS uploads now include information about teachers who have achieved the federally mandated "highly qualified" status, what courses and subjects are taught by individual teachers, and which individual students they are teaching. This and other information has allowed the ESE to provide districts with ever more sophisticated information about how they are performing. The DART information system and growth models now allow us to establish how we compare to districts of like socioeconomic characteristics as well as to determine whether individual students are growing academically from year to year in the same manner as "like" students from across the state.

- **Establish formative assessment writing teams to expand the current formative assessment programs.**

As memorialized in last year's update, district assessments have been written and completed for grades three through eight in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science and social studies. The mathematics assessments for grades three through eight have been revised this past year to be more reflective of the revised assessable standards for the 2012 Math MCAS as we transition to the new Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. District Elementary Math Coaches have developed chapter tests to match our curriculum for grades three through five, and those tests have been distributed to all teachers.

During the summer of 2011, high school faculty teams for Algebra 1 and geometry met and revised the common assessments for the 2011-2012 school year. Initiating the Algebra 1 and geometry district assessments has sparked a collaborative spirit among all of our high schools. The math department heads from each school have started to meet monthly with the Assistant Director of Curriculum and Instruction

for Mathematics to discuss, among other things, curriculum, assessment, course offerings, and scheduling. We have a formative assessment system that is the envy of other districts.

- **Plan for the purchase of record keeping systems.**

Senior leadership is working with a company to establish an electronic management system for managing and approving part-time and overtime worksheets. This system will allow all departments to more efficiently obtain authorization for working summer programs, committee work, tutoring work, and staff development. Over the course of the upcoming year, we intend to expand our electronic management to the maintenance of our professional day and visiting day forms.

- **Establish a better relationship with data department.**

The Lynn Public Schools Data Department has been a key player in the collection and preparation of reports and in the analysis of data, and has provided the district with exceptional response time. Because of the Data Department's ability to input student registration data in real time, my senior leadership team was able to update class size information daily at the opening of school so that we could open needed classrooms as soon as possible. The entire district's relationship with our Data Department could not be better.

3. Enhance education through technology.

- **Establish a fiber optic network among all school buildings.**

The fiber optic network is now operational and we have improved its reliability by connecting redundant links to most buildings. This means that even if one fiber connection goes down in one building, the second one will take over, so the school will not notice any down time. We have connected city hall and the police station, and there is one dedicated computer at the police station that allows access to all of our cameras and recorders.

- **Install wireless internet systems in all secondary schools.**

Wireless internet access is available at Classical, LVTI (main building and Annex), English, Callahan, Connery, Hood, Ford, and Drewicz. Wireless installations have slowed due to a delay in our E-Rate approvals. We apply for E-Rate federal funding every year, and the application includes expanding the wireless network. Because wireless installation is very expensive, we depend on our E-Rate yearly. Our middle schools will be next to become wireless.

- **Increase the number of SmartBoards and student response systems.**

Approximately 230 SmartBoards have been purchased and installed. All schools and all programs in the district have received them. We will continue to acquire Interactive boards until we reach the goal of one in every classroom. Response systems are evolving as are personal devices like smart phones and tablets. The Curriculum Department is testing iPads for school use by principals, faculty and students.

- **Purchase adaptive hardware for special education students.**

Adaptive technology listed in last year's report has been fully put in place. Through ARRA funding, the district has made great strides in providing the best equipment available for students who need it to access the curriculum. We are very proud of the adaptive materials that are available to our students. We are just starting to review the place for tablet technology, especially as it relates to special education and have decided that we will start by purchasing only Apple iPads, and will re-evaluate other tablet platforms at a later time.

- **Update technology at secondary schools.**

Secondary schools have virtually all updated computers. Interactive boards are being expanded throughout the district.

- **Increase computer laboratories at elementary schools.**

We have set up at least one computer lab of new up-to-date computers at every elementary school with thirty computers in each lab, and we have made sure that at least one computer in every classroom is an up-to-date computer.

4. Reduce drop-out and support students and their families.

- **Continue drop-out prevention support group.**

We continue to use the Apex Learning Credit Recovery Program at all high schools and provide professional development for teachers who oversee this program. Apex has become a huge success, and we are expanding the number of licenses and the training for teacher mentors. Students are able to use the system to make up classes that they may have failed or may be unable to fit into their schedules. Those students remained encouraged to stay in school and graduate with their classes.

This year, using funds initially from a Massachusetts High School Graduation Initiative (MassGrad) Grant and later from RTTT funds, three dropout prevention coaches and one recovery coach were given stipends to work with at-risk ninth graders at our three largest high schools and to work with the credit recovery of students who failed to graduate at Fecteau-Leary. Using RTTT funds, each new group of ninth grade students will be assigned a new coach who will follow them through to their senior year. We are currently in the process of writing for another MassGrad grant to assist in the further reduction of drop-outs in the middle schools.

To assist in drop-out prevention we also work with the Talent Search Program at North Shore Community College. We are also using RTTT funds to purchase a three-year contract with Naviance, a well know College and Career program, to help students track their learning and their own college and career preparation. Starting in the 6th grade, students and faculty will be able to use this program to engage students in planning for the future. Students who see a future and have a plan to get there, seldom drop out of school.

I am proud to say that Lynn’s drop-out rate has continuously decreased over the past three years, and, in a February 10, 2012, announcement (attached) by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), Lynn was cited as one of only five urban school districts that made the largest gains in reducing the number of drop-outs between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

District Drop-Out Percent for Lynn	2009	2010	2011
	6.1%	5.4%	4.6%

We are currently examining data to determine how much, if any, of our large influx of older students with limited formal schooling influence these data and what we can do to further improve results for all.

- **Continue work with outside agencies to support students and their families and provide home visits and counseling.**

Monthly principals meetings have been held at various agency locations throughout the city during the current school year to familiarize principals with potential support systems for their student populations. As part of our wraparound initiative, program specialists are developing systems of support for students and their families that maximize services already in existence throughout our city. Lynn Community Health is in the final stages of establishing clinics at Connery and Harrington, and planning meetings continue with United Way of Massachusetts to identify a large-scale focus for their funding in the City of Lynn. This year, the Special Education Department is sponsoring monthly workshops for parents on topics such as *Positive Parenting, Early Literacy and Reading to Young Children, Understanding the ARICA laws, How to Structure your home to motivate success at school, and Medication and Your Child.*

- **Explore alternative program opportunities.**

Students are thriving at CITY Academy, the program that is housed at Fecteau-Leary Jr./Sr. High School for our middle and high school students with behavioral challenges. In October, we were awarded at \$276,000 Tower Grant entitled Paving the Way to Independence, One Step at a Time. Students now have a daily transition skills class focusing on independent living skills, music therapy and additional community service activities. Also, the Special Education Department continues to better the EMBARK program, a life skills transition Program for our 18-22 year old special education population.

At Breed, we are developing a Tier III Emotional Support center that will provide support and a calming environment to general and special education students who may be returning to school from hospitalizations, dealing with periodic anxiety and depression, experiencing medication adjustments, having difficulty maintaining school attendance, those who have decreased academic performance and students who are “at-risk” for dropping out of school as a result of their emotional challenges.

5. Support full inclusion for special education students.

- **Continue to provide resource inclusion teachers where needed.**

Inclusion teachers are in every school, and an additional BCBA Behavior Specialist was hired to assist students who exhibit challenging behaviors and to support teachers in managing such issues in the general and special education setting. Also Tier III behavior support systems are beginning to come together with general and special education staff members who work to address and support students who are having difficulties at the elementary level.

Consultation to our principals regarding inclusion staffing and co-teaching strategies is on-going resulting in the expectation that students will be serviced in the least-restrictive environment for their particular needs.

- **Continue to staff and provide resources for high school learning centers.**

High School Learning Centers continue to assist students with improving their organizational skills and assisting them in their academic work. This year at Breed a similar model has been implemented, and we are planning to expand this to our other middle schools as soon as possible.

- **Continue to provide professional development to both regular and special education teachers in differentiated instruction.**

Our work with Dr. Kathy Porcaro has resulted in improvements with the MCAS long-write scores at the middle school level. Three courses are being offered to general and special education staff members who are able to earn three graduate credits in Differentiated Instruction and Meta Cognitive Strategies in literacy, math and science.

Positive Behavior and Intervention Support (PBIS) Training continues with all staff at the Washington Elementary, Fecteau Jr./Sr. High School and CITY Academy. The data collected clearly identifies significant improvements on behavior as across all levels.

6. Improve vocational/technical education.

We have spent a great deal of time, effort and resources in LVTI in a major effort to improve college and career readiness for our students. Major changes include a re-structuring of the Master Schedule to allow for Common Planning Time for all core academic subject staff, re-alignment of the grade 10 technical program schedule that allows for greater flexibility for placement of students in courses, the addition of honors level courses in all core academic subjects in all grades and the introduction of a required third-year history course for all juniors.

This year, LVTI offered both AP English (grades 11 and 12) and AP calculus. A group of students had been identified and participated in a six-week summer program to help prepare them for the rigors of AP courses. Having AP courses offered at LVTI puts the school on a more level playing field with the other high schools as students decide which school would be the best match for them to accomplish their future goals. LVTI will have twenty-five students participating in AP testing this May.

- **Continue to use the admissions policy at LVTI.**

The admissions policy that began in 2009 is firmly in place. Students who have selected LVTI as their chosen high school continue to be notably committed to their education and take pride in the school they are attending. This year's Open House for parents and prospective new students was an excellent success with attendance larger than in the past few years. At the present time LVTI has accepted approximately 250 students into next year's freshman class, an increase of 100 over last year's class.

- **Continue work to update and consolidate CAD and machine shops for 21st Century work.**

The new pre engineering shop continues to expand with a junior class being added in September. Precision Machining will be reintroduced this fall, and freshmen will have the opportunity to explore this newly modernized program. In addition, the Electronics program has been moved to the classroom adjacent to the Engineering department to fully round-out the collaboration of these three programs in providing the skills necessary for the 21st century workforce. The Early Childhood Program which was considered for discontinuation three years ago will be continued due to increased interest.

- **Use advisory boards to plan for the establishment of new programs.**

The Lynn Vocational Technical Advisory Boards continue to meet in yearly in November. A representative from all the Advisory Boards will report out to the School Committee this spring for the third consecutive year.

- **Explore possible move of administrative offices to allow for more expansion of academic/program facilities at LVTI.**

We received a report from CBI Consulting Inc. (CBI) after their review of the Bennett Street property as a possible site for relocating and consolidating our administrative offices. At the present time the heating system is being converted from oil to gas under the direction of the Inspectional Services Department. The preparation of the Bennett Street property is not happening as quickly as expected due to many problems requiring emergency repairs in some of our other buildings.

7. Assist, support and improve lower performing schools.

As noted last year, both Level 4 schools, Connery and Harrington, submitted Redesign Plans to the Department. Harrington's plan was approved to receive School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding. Although Connery's plan was not completely funded, the school did receive funds for a summer program, and the school will resubmit a redesign plan for approval in April. Both Connery and Harrington were publicly recognized by Governor Deval Patrick for being among the top 10 Level 4 schools with the biggest combined increase in the percent of students scoring proficient and advanced between 2010 and 2011, all grades combined (attached). Both schools are implementing a Tier 3 Response to Intervention Model for both social/emotional supports and academic instruction. Using funds from the Redesign Grant, WestEd an approved ESE services provider, has been hired to work with both schools to identify areas of need for professional development and to assist in the implementation of the new educator evaluation system. Counselors from Lynn Community Health are at Connery and Harrington to provide supports to families in need.

The Lynn Community Health Center and the Lynn Public School Department continue to work together to support two new School-Based Health Clinics at Connery and Harrington. Lynn Community Health

Center has worked tirelessly on grants for funding. The architectural plans have been submitted and both clinics are well on their way to completion.

As I wrote last year, with each improvement to our Level 4 schools comes the frustrating realization that we should have enough money to provide all of our schools with these same necessary and effective supports. I will begin this year with a commitment to continue the support for Connery and Harrington while promising a more equitable share for the other schools in the district.

- **Establish computer labs in identified elementary schools to support remediation and academic support.**

Not only do Harrington and Connery Elementary Schools have computer labs, but all of our elementary schools have updated computer labs with 30 computers each, and every elementary school has at least one updated computer in each classroom.

- **Establish before and after school programs.**

Both Level 4 schools continue to offer before and after school programs. Connery also has a Saturday program for both students and parents.

- **Continue to provide principal support in lower performing schools.**

New principals and principals in lower performing schools continue to be mentored and assisted by the district and by outside consultants. We have collaborated with WestEd, one of the approved vendors by ESE for support with the new Teacher Evaluation System, and we are providing support to principals and district administrators as we all work to initiate this new system.

- **Establish elementary grade level and content area working groups.**

New grade level and content area work groups have begun meeting to deal with the transition from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to the Common Core.

8. Attract, retain, and support highly qualified teachers.

- **Reorganize personnel department to focus on highly qualified teacher and paraprofessional requirements.**

With full knowledge and acceptance of the fact that the classroom teacher is the single most important factor in student achievement, we continue our focus on highly qualified teachers and have again seen a steady increase in our percentages. In 2010-2011 the percentage of core academic classes taught by teachers who are highly qualified was 94.3%, up from 89.4% in 2009-2010 and 89.0% for 2008-2009. We have reduced the number of non-highly qualified teachers from 84 in 2009-2010 to 68 in 2010-2011. In order to assist teachers in obtaining highly qualified status, the district continues to offer Massachusetts Teacher Educator Licensure (MTEL) prep courses in the areas of general curriculum, reading, mathematics, English as a second language (ESL), and general science. We have also offered individual tutoring to certain teachers who have not obtained highly qualified status for consecutive years. The district assists all non-highly qualified teachers in creating action plans that outline their options for meeting the highly qualified requirements.

We no longer hire paraprofessionals who are not both highly qualified and certified. Currently 60% of our paraprofessionals are certified and highly qualified. Another 32% are certified and are working on their highly qualified status, and 8% are working on both their certifications and their highly qualified status with our assistance.

Our Acting Human Resource Director is committed to hiring the best teachers possible and is actively recruiting. She has signed the Lynn Public Schools up for several job fairs and networking events in the spring: one sponsored by Merrimack Valley Educators' Consortium held at Merrimack College, one

sponsored by the Massachusetts Educational Recruiting Consortium (MERC), the Lesley Educator Career Expo held at Lesley University, the Gearing Up for the Education Job Search networking event sponsored by Salem State University, a job fair sponsored by the Northshore Education Consortium and held at Danvers High School, and a Virtual Job Fair at the University of Massachusetts Amherst's School of Education Virtual Job Fair. All open positions are advertised on our website, the City of Lynn website, the ESE website, Salem State University website, and Lesley University website, and we are in contact with Gordon College throughout the year when positions become open. We also advertise in the Boston Globe Educator Section which is published in March and gives us access to the Boston.com job search website.

The Human Resource Department continues to work closely with the Data Center on maintaining an updated and accurate database of employees for ESE and has been working closely with our Assistant Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Highly Qualified on teacher licensing issues and highly qualified teacher status. Employee data demands are increasing at an enormous rate as a result of the ESE Data Warehouse requirements and the ESE Race to the Top approved initiatives. With School Committee permission to add an additional Computer Operator to be shared by the Data and Human Resources Departments, we will be able to respond better to data requirements.

- **Begin seed program with Salem State College for the grooming of future teachers of color.**

The district embarked on a pilot program called AHANA during the last school year. While the program does have some potential, operational details to allow for smooth implementation at the high schools were not adequately developed by the subcontractor. Senior leadership had no choice but to abandon the project but continues to seek avenues for achieving this goal.

9. Explore innovative programs to support improved student achievement.

- **Explore Virtual High School programs to broaden AP offerings.**

We have explored virtual high school programs. Those programs require the “donation” of a teacher from our own staff to develop and plan for a new course offering, a yearly fee for each student who participates in the program, and a set fee that allows a specific number of students to participate. With our focus on implementing the MassCore curriculum as required by the RTTT initiative, we have decided to put on hold any further exploration of virtual programs for the duration of the RTTT grant period.

- **Establish before and after school programs.**

Extended time options exist for schools that choose to use their Title I funds for this purpose. During the months of March and April we will determine how much of our Title I school choice and SES funds have been unused and are available for potential use during summer 2012. ESE often makes additional funds available at this time each year; should they do so again the funds will be utilized for this purpose.

- **Expand hours and course offerings for LEEP.**

Our expansion of the LEEP program has been focused on providing older non-English speaking students who come to us with limited or no formal schooling. The program for them is expanding and has focused on teaching English and basic math. These students continue to present many challenges for us.

- **Establish a grant writing system to focus support.**

This goal was addressed last year; however we will be revisiting our grant writing system this summer with interest from one or two members of the School Committee.

10. Maintain safe and drug-free schools.

Under the expert direction of our Safety and Security Liaison, Lynn continues its long-range plan to provide a safe and secure learning environment for our students, faculty and staff. I feel confident in

stating that the policies, procedures, software and hardware put in place for the Lynn Public Schools has established us at the forefront of providing such an environment.

- **Complete installation of card access systems in all schools.**

All schools have Keyscan Card Access Control Systems that are monitored at all times from a computer terminal at the School Security Office on North Common Street. Entrance to all buildings is recorded and time stamped. When employees enter our school buildings, the school name and the door entered is recorded with the ID of the person entering displayed on the screen.

Our high schools have a 4-door reader system, and our middle and elementary schools have 2-door reader systems. All LPS staff and Inspectional Service Department (ISD) personnel are supplied with cards to access our buildings allowing doors to be locked at all times. Per policy, photo identification badges must be visibly displayed at all times on a black and white LPS break-away lanyards. At present there are over 2,400 active employee badges issued.

- **Increase camera surveillance systems in schools.**

Surveillance cameras have been installed at all secondary schools. Each secondary school has a minimum of thirty-two cameras, and the three largest high schools have forty cameras each. With ARRA funding we recently installed a 16-Camera Security System at each of our largest eight elementary schools: Cobbet, Connery, Callahan, Drewicz, Harrington, Hood, Ford, and Ingalls. This brings the total number of surveillance cameras in the district to four hundred twenty.

In addition to the cameras we have installed twenty-five new 4G computers with 22” monitors that are assigned to the principals and vice principals of the secondary schools allowing for maximum use of the district’s security camera and recording system. We have upgraded our viewing software to GE TruVision Navigator 4.0 allowing the user to easily monitor, record, and save any video evidence needed to a DVD or Flash Drive. This program allows the user to take and print “snapshots” of events as well.

We have also installed a new computer system with dual 32” monitors at the School Security Office with the capability of viewing all four hundred twenty cameras remotely and preserving the video from all cameras at all times.

And, as a result of the conversion we made to the fiber-optic network, we are now connected to the Lynn Police Department’s Command Center where all cameras may be viewed should there be an event which requires such access.

- **Explore the possibility of returning SROs to the secondary schools.**

With the cooperation of the Mayor and the Lynn Police Department, we have reinstated three School Resource Officers (SRO) one at each of our middle schools. We are exploring the possibility of hiring additional SROs to the high schools, however funding may be limited.

Additional Security Updates

School emergency operations plans are firmly in place. Building floor plans, aerial photos and street map documents have been updated to include all Lynn Public School building sites with copies of all documents sent to the Lynn Police and Lynn Fire Departments. The Lynn Public School Department continues to collaborate with the Lynn Police Department (LPD) in conducting School Emergency Operations Plan drills for practice with lockdowns and evacuations. Officer Ferrari conducts School Safety Checks during which teams of school administrators, LPD officers, Sheriff Department officers, and Sheriff Department drug-sniffing K9s search common areas in our secondary buildings for illegal contraband.

LPS has also collaborated with the United States Attorney's Office, Essex County District Attorney's Office and the LPD to present a new program, Your Future, Your Decision. This program is designed to assist middle school students in developing strong decision making skills to encourage them to stay away from gang life. The program also exposes the students to opportunities available within Lynn through a Resource Fair and a Lynn Teen Resource Guide. Last year this program was held at Marshall Middle School. It will be held at Breed Middle School this year and Pickering Middle School next year, and because it repeats every three years, all middle school students will be exposed to this wonderful experience.

Athletic Update

I am proud that Lynn continues a no-fee policy for athletics and other activities and is still able to make many changes that have contributed to the improvements of our athletic programs.

Our newly developed concussion policy ensures that our schools take every possible step to prevent concussions. Our coaches and trainers have taken courses to ensure that an athlete is immediately removed from competition upon identification of symptoms. Students are required to take immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Assessment (IMPACT) as a pretest, and once diagnosed with a concussion, they must meet their same scores on the posttest as the pretest before being allowed back into competition. Our athletic programs are educating our players and their families on the lasting dangers resulting from concussions.

We have mandated weekly progress reports signed by teachers to ensure that players are maintaining sufficient academic success to continue to play. Earlier this school year, the School Committee adopted the "One F Rule" that prohibits students from playing a sport when they fail more than one class. We believe this reinforces to our students our mission that excellent academic achievement is our top priority.

Social, Emotional, Health and Wellness Update

The Prom Teen Health Initiative has been extremely successful. All high school students and their parents are invited to Parent Prom Teen Health Initiative evenings at three of our high schools to discuss the importance of appropriate behavior, the Social Host Law and safety during prom season. Each high school will hold the Prom Teen Health Initiative evening at the end of March.

Students continue to be encouraged to "walk the marked lines" that exist around all of our school buildings to support healthy activity, and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey will once again be administered in the spring to all middle and high school students.

MSBA Update

The Marshall Middle School building project is moving forward. The Lynn City Council with the support of the Mayor appropriated \$750,000 to go forward with the Feasibility Study for the Marshall Middle School. Subsequently, a Request for Services of an Owner's Project Manager was approved by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) and was advertised on the Public Register. Today the Marshall School Building Selection Committee interviewed the three finalists for the position of Owner's Project Manager. The next step will be to select a Designer for the project. Pickering continues to be the next priority school for the district with elementary schools not far behind.

Fine Arts Update

I remain committed to fine arts as a major part of our curriculum for all students, and the Lynn Public Schools continues to make outstanding improvements in its programs through the efforts of our Director of Fine Arts and his entire staff. Instrumental and vocal music programs are showing excellent growth as are the programs in the visual and performing arts.

Curriculum improvements include the purchase of music books and other teaching materials necessary to support standards-based instruction in music. A redesigned vocal program at the high school level has created renewed student interest and has resulted in advances in musical achievement and performance, and additional support to the theater arts programs at the high school level is being added to expand that program. Our music and visual arts curricula have been supported to provide teachers with detail necessary to plan and implement standards-based lessons that have clear objectives, well thought-out procedures, assessments and connections to other subject areas.

Instrumental music continues its outstanding progress. The band and string programs have increased in size and are now serving approximately 900 students with weekly instruction. Our Lynn Public Schools Marching Band has been outfitted in new uniforms and will be one of two bands representing Massachusetts in the 2012 National 4th of July Parade in Washington D.C. with support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The High School Jazz Band, because of its excellent performances and reputation, has received support from the Salem Jazz and Soul Festival and participated in the Salem State University Jazz Festival in February.

The Lynn Public School Department has established multiple prestigious partnerships with results that benefit our students.

- Through our educational partnership with the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO), fifteen 5th grade students will be awarded scholarships totaling approximately \$20,000 to attend Days in the Arts (DARTS) in Lenox this summer; two hundred students will receive complimentary tickets to a BSO Youth Concert at Symphony Hall in March; fees are waived for Lynn teachers who participate in the professional development workshops at the BSO Resource Center and at Symphony Hall; and the City of Lynn was awarded a Community Chamber Concert with free admission.
- Through our educational partnership with the Peabody Essex Museum teachers and students in seven elementary schools are participating in the Multi Visit Partnership Program to enrich classroom learning and address curriculum goals that align with the state curriculum frameworks, and the Lynn visual arts teachers participated in a full day professional development workshop on arts integration at the museum at no cost.
- Through our educational partnership with the Handel and Haydn Society multiple schools enjoyed performances of Voices of America, a musical journey through time that aligns with and supports the MA Curriculum Framework in history; Vocal Master Classes were presented to Lynn high school and middle school students to help them prepare for Northeastern Senior Districts and Northeastern Junior Districts; and ??? Students were awarded scholarships to participate in the Vocal Apprenticeship Program of pre-professional training for talented singers, instrumental lessons and study in music theory for students in grades 3 through 12.
- Through a partnership with Music at Eden's Edge our students were able to experience live chamber music and learn basic musical concepts that support and enhance the curriculum in a format that allows them to relate personally to the musicians and to become involved with the music making.
- Through our partnership with Endicott College in LLP, we will be sending two students from LEHS to take acting classes at The Boston Children's Theater.

District MCAS, Graduation Rate and Achievement Gap Data
MCAS

I reiterate last year’s introductory statement on district data: ultimately, all my efforts and those of our administrators, principals, teachers, paraprofessionals and all staff in general have one mission: to continuously improve students’ social, cultural, and academic achievement and provide all students with the skills, knowledge and experiences to achieve our vision, and whether we like it or not the measures of that effectiveness are the MCAS results, the graduation rate, the achievement gap data and the attendance rate.

First, I present district MCAS data. Lynn as a district continues to show gains in each of the past three years and is currently at the top in both ELA and mathematics when compared to the other ESE identified Commissioners Districts.

2009, 2010, and 2011 CPI Results for Commissioner’s Districts

District	ELA 2009	ELA 2010	ELA 2011	District	Math 2009	Math 2010	Math 2011
Lynn	76.5	77.2	78.7	Lynn	66.9	68.8	70.0
Brockton	77.7	77.1	76.6	Lowell	64.9	67.8	69.6
Fall River	75.5	75.0	76.3	Boston	64.0	68.0	67.5
Worcester	75.5	77.4	76.1	Worcester	66.2	68.8	67.4
New Bedford	74.2	75.4	76.0	New Bedford	65.8	68.0	67.4
Lowell	74.2	74.9	75.6	Fall River	63.0	66.7	66.8
Boston	74.1	74.8	75.2	Brockton	67.1	66.9	65.1
Lawrence	71.6	73.7	72.4	Lawrence	57.3	62.0	60.0
Springfield	70.9	70.8	71.8	Springfield	57.3	58.2	59.1

2011 Data from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website www.doe.mass.edu

These results are significant considering our First Language Not English (FLNE) population has increased steadily to now account for 53.6% of our students compared to the state percent of 16.7%, and the percentage of our students who receive free or reduced lunch, the state’s measure of poverty, has increased consistently over the past several years to a current 82.4%. We have surpassed all Commissioner’s Districts in spite of the fact that we have the second largest percentage of students for whom English is not their first language and the third largest percentage of students who receive free or reduced lunch. The chart below compares our student numbers, percent of students for whom English is not their first language, and percent of students who receive free or reduced lunch with the other eight Commissioner’s Districts.

District	Number of Students in District	% of District First Language Not English	District	% of District Free or Reduced Lunch
Lawrence	12,900	74.9	Lawrence	87.0
Lynn	13,731	53.6	Springfield	85.6
Boston	55,027	44.8	Lynn	82.4
Worcester	24,411	43.8	Fall River	78.3
Lowell	13,548	41.1	Lowell	75.1
Brockton	16,162	34.6	Worcester	72.1
Springfield	25,185	25.0	Brockton	70.8
Fall River	9,834	22.7	Boston	69.5
New Bedford	12,551	21.7	New Bedford	64.4

2012 Data from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website www.doe.mass.edu

The following chart shows the Composite Performance Index (CPI) for each of our schools over the past three years. [CPI is a 100-point index that assigns 100, 75, 50, 25, or 0 points to each student participating in MCAS/MCAS-Alt tests based on their performance. A school or district's CPI is calculated by combining points generated by students who take the standard MCAS tests with points generated by students who take the MCAS-Alt. The total points assigned to each student are added together and the sum is divided by the total number of students assessed.]

Lynn School CPIs Compared with District and State Results

School	ELA 2009	ELA 2010	ELA 2011		School	Math 2009	Math 2010	Math 2011
Classical	85.6	86.4	90.6		Aborn	82.9	84.9	88.8
Sisson	89.6	91.8	90.1		Sisson	86.3	86.6	88.5
English	89.9	89.7	88.4		Lincoln/Thomson	84.6	88.7	87.4
Aborn	84.2	84.5	88.0		Shoemaker	87.1	85.7	84.9
Shoemaker	86.2	86.8	87.9		Classical	80.3	83.1	84.4
State	86.5	86.9	87.2		English	88.3	86.2	82.6
Pickering	85.5	86.4	85.8		Tracy	80.3	86.9	80.8
Lincoln/Thomson	85.0	83.0	85.4		State	78.5	79.9	79.9
Brickett	85.9	86.0	80.9		Ingalls	71.4	65.6	78.1
Callahan	76.7	79.5	80.0		Drewicz	66.8	76.1	77.0
LVTI	76.4	78.5	79.5		Sewell/Anderson	81.1	78.7	76.7
Sewell/Anderson	81.7	80.9	79.4		Callahan	72.9	81.3	76.3
Breed	79.2	76.8	78.8		Pickering	70.6	72.6	75.3
Lynn District	76.5	77.2	78.7		Lynn Woods	87.6	74.4	74.7
Tracy	78.9	79.6	78.4		Brickett	74.3	80.0	74.5
Lynn Woods	92	80.2	77.8		Hood	60.0	69.3	74.2
Hood	66.5	74.2	77.5		Ford	70.0	69.6	72.2
Ingalls	69.8	67.4	76.6		Lynn District	66.9	67.7	70.0
Marshall	72.5	75.0	76.5		Harrington	49.2	55.2	68.2
Drewicz	71.9	73.0	75.5		Connery	63.7	58.4	67.3
Ford	80.7	74.6	72.8		Cobbet	55.0	63.9	66.2
Connery	56.6	61.1	69.8		LVTI	66.8	69.1	64.1
Harrington	56.1	61.0	67.5		Breed	60.0	61.4	60.4
Cobbet	61.5	71.5	67.1		Marshall	51.9	54.1	55.3
Fecteau-Leary	62.5	63.5	61.8		Washington	36.8	49.0	45.2
Washington	32.8	37.5	45.0		Fecteau-Leary	42.0	47.8	37.9

2011 Data from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website www.doe.mass.edu

District Graduation Rate Results

With respect to our 4-year adjusted graduation rate (includes MCAS appeals), we have made gains but we still need to continue to improve. Our drop-out and MCAS appeal efforts greatly assist us in improving our graduation rate, and we expect that the recent addition of Program Specialists for Data and Assessment in our high schools will assist the district in applying for and receiving MCAS appeals. This should assist in improving our graduation rate and reducing our drop-out rate.

District	4-Year Adjusted Grad. Rate 2007	4-Year Adjusted Grad. Rate 2008	4-Year Adjusted Grad. Rate 2009	4-Year Adjusted Grad. Rate 2010
Worcester	69.8	69.2	70.1	74.4
Lowell	69.0	73.8	70.0	73.6
Lynn	68.5	70.5	70.7	72.1
Brockton	67.9	72.8	71.5	71.1
Fall River	54.1	56.0	62.5	69.1
Boston	57.9	59.9	61.4	68.3
New Bedford	58.2	56.1	55.7	59.2
Springfield	53.8	54.4	54.5	56.7
Lawrence	40.8	35.8	48.1	49.0

2011 Data from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website www.doe.mass.edu

Data on Reducing the Achievement Gap

Again this year, the data showing MCAS results for our special populations support the fact that Lynn is improving education for all. In the chart below are the updated percentages for our special populations over the past seventeen years.

Lynn Special Populations as a Percent of Total Student Enrollment

Special Populations	1995	2000	2005	2009	2010	2011	2012
Limited English Proficient	7.6%	16.4%	18.8%	25.8%	25.9%	21.6%	19.6%
First Language not English	28.2%	36.3%	44.4%	49.5%	50.7%	52.7%	53.6%
Low-Income	52.3%	47.2%	73.5%	75.4%	78.4%	78.6%	82.4%
Special Education	14.8%	16.8%	15.3%	16.6%	16.3%	16.1%	16.5%
African-American	13.8%	15.0%	15.9%	12.9%	12.8%	12.4%	12.0%
Asian	11.5%	14.0%	11.5%	9.7%	9.7%	9.9%	10.0%
Hispanic	20.7%	25.9%	36.1%	46.0%	47.6%	49.4%	51.0%
White	53.8%	44.7%	36.6%	27.6%	26.1%	24.5%	23.1%
Total Student Population	13,600	15,484	14,290	13,273	13,373	13,547	13,731

2011 Data from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website www.doe.mass.edu

While the percent of African-American, Asian, and Special Education students have remained relatively stable, the percent of Limited English Proficient students and White students decreased while Hispanic and Low-Income students have increased.

The following chart shows the achievement gaps for Lynn and comparable communities for the subgroups ESE is using for comparison purposes. The gap is determined by subtracting the state subgroup's CPI from the district subgroup's CPI. A negative number indicates a CPI for the district subgroup that is lower than the CPI for the subgroup of students from the entire state. A positive number indicates a CPI for the district subgroup that is above the CPI for the subgroup of students from the entire state. Lynn's results are highlighted. The data indicate that Lynn is reducing the achievement gap for

students in all three subgroups. In fact Lynn leads the Commissioner's Districts in achievement gap reduction in five out of six areas, and in the sixth we differ from one other district by six tenths of one point.

2011 Achievement Gap Data for Commissioner's Districts

HISPANIC SUBGROUP	District	2010 ELA Gap	2011 ELA Gap	District	2010 Math Gap	2011 Math Gap
	Lynn	-1.1	0.5	Lynn	-0.3	1.3
	Brockton	1.5	0.2	STATE	0	0
	STATE	0	0	Boston	0.5	0
	Boston	-2.3	-2.4	Brockton	-1.2	-1.7
	Lawrence	-0.8	-3	New Bedford	-1.5	-2.3
	New Bedford	-4.2	-3	Lawrence	-3.2	-5.9
	Springfield	-7	-6.5	Lowell	-7.5	-6.1
	Worcester	-4.2	-6.8	Worcester	-4.9	-6.9
	Lowell	-8.5	-8.3	Fall River	-6.4	-7.8
Fall River	-9.4	-9.4	Springfield	-10.6	-9.8	
SPED SUBGROUP	District	2010 ELA Gap	2011 ELA Gap	District	2010 Math Gap	2011 Math Gap
	STATE	0	0	STATE	0	0
	Lynn	-9.6	-8.1	New Bedford	-7.3	-6.3
	New Bedford	-10.3	-10.9	Lynn	-7	-6.9
	Brockton	-12.4	-11.4	Boston	-8.5	-9.2
	Boston	-12.6	-11.6	Brockton	-11	-11.1
	Lawrence	-8.3	-12.7	Lowell	-13.6	-11.2
	Fall River	-14.8	-13.9	Lawrence	-10.3	-13.4
	Worcester	-11.6	-15	Springfield	-15	-13.5
	Lowell	-17.1	-15.5	Worcester	-11.5	-13.6
Springfield	-15.4	-16	Fall River	-11.7	-14.1	
LOW INCOME SUBGROUP	District	2010 ELA Gap	2011 ELA Gap	District	2010 Math Gap	2011 Math Gap
	STATE	76.5	0	STATE	67.1	0
	Lynn	-2.1	-0.8	Lynn	-1.6	-0.7
	Brockton	-2.7	-3.7	Lowell	-4	-1.8
	Fall River	-4.8	-4	Boston	-2.3	-3
	New Bedford	-3.7	-4.3	New Bedford	-1.6	-3.4
	Boston	-4.7	-4.8	Fall River	-4.1	-4
	Lowell	-5.7	-5.4	Worcester	-3.8	-5.4
	Lawrence	-3.3	-5.5	Brockton	-4	-6
	Worcester	-3.8	-5.7	Lawrence	-5.7	-8.2
Springfield	-7.4	-7.2	Springfield	-10.9	-9.9	

2011 Data from Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website www.doe.mass.edu

Attendance Rates

Our attendance rates for elementary and middle schools remain within acceptable percentages to allow for attaining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The state requires 92% or an increase of two percentage points over a previous year's rate. There are no attendance requirements for high schools in order to achieve AYP; attendance requirements influence AYP results of elementary and middle schools only.

SCHOOL	CURRENT 2011-2012 ATTENDANCE RATES
ABORN	97
BRICKETT	95
CALLAHAN	94
COBBET	96
CONNERY	95
DREWICZ	95
FORD	96
HARRINGTON	95
HOOD	95
INGALLS	95
LYNN WOODS	96
SEWELL ANDERSON	96
SHOEMAKER	95
SISSON	96
LINCOLN THOMSON	97
TRACY	96
BREED	94
MARSHALL	94
PICKERING	95
CLASSICAL	93
ENGLISH	92
LVTI	92
WASHINGTON	90
FECTEAU LEARY	70

College Acceptances as of February 2012 for 2012-2013

I conclude with a list of college and post secondary school acceptances received by our students so far this year. These acceptances are testimony to the fact that the Lynn Public School District is continually changing, advancing, evolving, and succeeding in its mission to provide outstanding educational opportunities to the students in Lynn.

American International College	New England Art Institute
Anna Maria College	New England College
Assumption College	New England Hair Academy
Bay Path College	Newbury College
Bay State College	North Carolina State University
Becker College	North Shore Community College
Benjamin Franklin	Northeastern University
Berkeley College	Norwich University
Blaine Empire School	Notre Dame
Boston College	Penn State University
Boston Architectural College	Peterson School
Boston University	Porter and Chester Institute
Bowdoin College	Purdue University
Bridgewater State University	Regis College
Brigham Young University	Rend Lake College
Brandeis University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Brown University	Rhode Island College
Bunker Hill Community College	Rivier College
Cape Cod Community College	Roger Williams University
Centre College	Roxbury Community College
Coast Guard Academy	Salem State University
Colby-Sawyer College	Salve Regina University
College of St. Rose	San Jacinto North College
College of the Holy Cross	Simmons College
Community College of Rhode Island	Southern New Hampshire University
Culinary School	St. Andrews Presbyterian College
Curry College	St. Anselm College
Dean College	St. Bonaventure University
Drexel University	St. Johns University
East Tennessee State	St. Leo University
Easter Nazarene College	St. Thomas Moore Prep
Elms College	Suffolk University
Emmanuel College	Tulane University
Empire Beauty School	Union College
Everest College	Universal Technical Institute
Fisher College	University of Bridgeport

Fitchburg State University	University of Connecticut
Fordham University	University of Hartford
Framingham State University	University of Maryland
Franklin Pierce University	University of Massachusetts Amherst
French Culinary Institute	University of Massachusetts Boston
George Washington University	University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Gordon College	University of Massachusetts Lowell
Hamilton College	University of New England
Harvard University	University of New Hampshire
Hesser College	University of New Haven
Howard University	University of New Haven
Hudson Valley Community College	University of Pittsburg
Iona	University of Rhode Island
ITT Tech	University of Rochester
Johnson and Wales University	University of Southern Maine
Keene State College	University of Vermont
Le Cordon Bleu	University of West Virginia
Lee Academy	Ventura College
Lehman College	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Lesley University	Wesley College
Lincoln Tech	Wesleyan University
Marian Court College	Western New England University
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	Westfield State University
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy	William College
Merrimack College	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Middlesex Community College	Worcester State University
Mt. Ida College	AND MORE TO COME!

Lynn Public Schools

Superintendent's Goals for the School Years 2009-2012, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012

- 1. Emphasize and support standards-based instruction for all grades and all content areas.**
 - Expand departmentalized instruction in grades 3, 4, and 5.
 - Purchase and dispense remediation software.
 - Initiate Response to Intervention programs for both social and academic student improvement.
 - Initiate Learning and Leadership program for middle school students in STEM subjects.
 - Continue to support ELL programs for ELL students at all levels.
- 2. Emphasize and support data-driven decision-making.**
 - Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on using data to improve instruction.
 - Establish formative assessment writing teams to expand the current formative assessment programs.
 - Plan for the purchase of record keeping systems.
 - Establish a better relationship with data department.
- 3. Enhance education through technology.**
 - Establish a fiber optic network among all school buildings.
 - Install wireless internet systems in all secondary schools.
 - Increase the number of SmartBoards and student response systems.
 - Purchase adaptive hardware for special education students.
 - Update technology at secondary schools.
 - Increase computer laboratories at elementary schools.
- 4. Reduce drop-out and support students and their families.**
 - Continue dropout prevention support group.
 - Continue work with outside agencies to support students and their families and provide home visits and counseling.
 - Explore alternative program opportunities.
- 5. Support full inclusion for special education students.**
 - Continue to provide resource inclusion teachers where needed.
 - Continue to staff and provide resources for high school learning centers.
 - Continue to provide professional development to both regular and special education teachers in differentiated instruction.
- 6. Improve vocational/technical education.**
 - Continue to use admissions policy at LVTI.
 - Continue work to update and consolidate CAD and machine shops for 21st Century work.
 - Use advisory boards to plan for the establishment of new programs.
 - Explore possible move of administrative offices to allow for more expansion of academic/program facilities at LVTI.
- 7. Assist, support and improve lower performing schools.**
 - Establish computer labs in identified elementary schools to support remediation and academic support.
 - Establish before and after school programs.
 - Continue to provide principal support in lower performing schools.
 - Establish elementary grade level and content area working groups.
- 8. Attract, retain, and support highly qualified teachers.**
 - Reorganize personnel department to focus on highly qualified teacher and paraprofessional requirements.
 - Begin seed program with Salem State College for the grooming of future teachers of color.
- 9. Explore innovative programs to support improved student achievement.**
 - Explore Virtual High School programs to broaden AP offerings.
 - Establish before and after school programs.
 - Expand hours and course offerings for LEEP.
 - Establish a grant writing system to focus support.
- 10. Maintain safe and drug-free schools.**
 - Complete installation of card access systems in all schools.
 - Increase camera surveillance systems in schools.
 - Explore possibility of returning SROs to the secondary schools.

For Immediate Release

Friday, February 10, 2012

Contact: JC Considine 781-338-3112

4-Year Graduation Rate Climbs for 5th Straight Year

Annual dropout rate improves – Lowest in two decades

MALDEN - The Patrick-Murray Administration today announced that the state's four-year graduation rate improved for the fifth consecutive year in 2011, while the annual dropout rate dipped to the lowest level in two decades.

According to a statewide report released today, 83.4 percent of the 74,307 students in the 2011 cohort graduated within four years, an increase of 1.3 percentage points from 2010, 1.9 percentage points from 2009, 2.2 percentage points from 2008, 2.5 percentage points from 2007, and 3.5 percentage points from 2006. A cohort is comprised of students who entered high school as 9th graders or who transferred into the same cohort at any time over high school.

"We are committed to ensuring that all of our students graduate from high school prepared for higher education, the workforce, or both," said Governor Deval Patrick. "I am proud of the progress we have made, but we won't be satisfied until we have a system that closes the achievement gap and prepares all of our students for success."

The state's annual dropout rate also improved since last year, as 2.7 percent, or 7,894 out of 289,161 high school students in grades 9-12 dropped out of school during the 2010-2011 school year. This is the lowest dropout rate in two decades, and the third year in a row with a rate below 3 percent. The 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 rates were 2.9 percent.

"School districts are working hard to reach at-risk students. More and more students have the supports they need and motivation to stay in school and graduate on time," said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester. "In today's world, a high school diploma is a minimum requirement. Our goal is to provide all students with a high quality education that prepares them for college and careers."

"Our focus continues to be on helping all students reach higher and graduate with the knowledge and skills they need to keep growing and learning," said Education Secretary Paul Reville. "This improvement is an affirmation of our commitment to reaching at-risk students, but also a reminder there is more work ahead – more students that need our support in persisting through high school."

All subgroups, with the exception of limited English proficient (LEP) students, improved their four-year graduation rates since last year. In 2011, the four-year graduation rates rose by 2.2 percentage points for African American students (from 68.5 percent to 70.7), by 1.9 percentage points for low income students (from 67.9 to 69.8), by 1.6 percentage points for special education students (from 64 to 65.6), by 1.4 percentage points for white students (from 87.7 to 89.1), and by 0.8 percentage points for Hispanic students (from 61.1 to 61.9) and Asian students (from 86.9 to 87.7). The four-year graduation rate decreased for LEP students by 1.6 percentage points (from 57.8 to 56.2).

Through targeted initiatives, including [After-school Enrichment Academies](#), recently proposed in Governor Deval Patrick's [Gateway Cities Education Agenda](#), which will give middle and high school English language learners additional intensive and targeted language instruction, the Administration is working to close the gap between English language learners and their peers. Similarly, proposed Student Support Councils and High School Career Academies are designed to mitigate problems, traditionally associated with poverty, which can get in the way of students coming to school and being ready to learn; and to motivate students to persist through high school by creating multiple pathways to college and career, and giving students access to internships and other work-based learning opportunities earlier in their academic careers.

Additionally, in fall 2010, Massachusetts was one of only two states awarded a federal High School Graduation Initiative (HSGI) grant by the U.S. Department of Education. That five-year, \$15 million grant (referred to locally as "MassGrad") is helping support state and local efforts around high school dropout prevention, intervention and recovery. Beginning in May 2011, a total of 47 Massachusetts schools from 27 districts received either a MassGrad Implementation Award or a Planning Award to employ research-based practices to increase their high school graduation rates. A number of these schools were able to capitalize on their funding right away, providing intensive summer programs to their most at-risk students.

A total of 29 schools, or 62 percent of those that received funding, showed an increase in their overall graduation rate from 2010 to 2011. In addition, a total of 27 schools, or 57 percent of funded schools, showed a decrease in their overall dropout rate.

The urban school districts that made the largest gains in reducing the number of dropouts between 2009-10 and 2010-11 included:

- Boston had 75 fewer students drop out in 2010-11 than in 2009-10 (0.4 percentage point improvement, from 6.8 percent to 6.4 percent);
- New Bedford had 39 fewer students drop out in 2010-11 than in 2009-10 (1.0 percentage point improvement, from 8.1 percent to 7.1 percent);

- Lynn had 31 fewer students drop out in 2010-11 than in 2009-10 (0.8 percentage point improvement, from 5.4 percent to 4.6 percent);
- Somerville had 26 fewer students drop out in 2010-11 than in 2009-10 (2.0 percentage point improvement, from 5.6 percent to 3.6 percent);
- Malden had 19 fewer students drop out in 2010-11 than in 2009-10 (1.3 percentage point improvement, from 4.9 percent to 3.6 percent).

Boston, Lynn, Somerville and Malden were each MassGrad Award recipients.

Other findings in the Graduation Rate report include:

- Statewide, more than 80 percent of students graduated in four years in 230 out of 288 school districts (79.9 percent; up from 79.2 percent in 2010 and 75.7 percent in 2009) and 257 out of 370 schools (69.5 percent; up from 68.8 percent in 2010 and 65 percent in 2009).
- The five-year graduation rate for the 2011 cohort was 84.7 percent, up 0.7 percentage points from the 2010 five-year graduation rate and the highest five-year graduation rate since the Department began to calculate the rates in 2007.
- Students who attended a single school throughout high school continue to graduate at much higher rates than more transient students. On average, 87.2 percent of students from the 2011 cohort who attending a single high school graduated in four years, higher than the comparable rates for students who attending two schools (67.8 percent), three schools (41.6 percent), and four or more schools (32.2 percent).
- Among non-graduates in the 2011 cohort, 6.6 percent are still in school, 1 percent were non-graduating completers, 1.7 percent earned a GED, 7.2 percent dropped out, and 0.1 percent were expelled.
- 58.6 percent of non-graduates who are still in school have earned their Competency Determination (CD).

Other findings in the Annual Dropout report include:

- Statewide, 25.8 percent of all dropouts were 9th graders, 25.5 percent were 10th graders, 24 percent were 11th graders, and 24.7 percent were 12th graders.
- 2.3 percent of female students and 3.2 percent of male students dropped out of high school during the 2010-11 school year.
- 43 percent of all dropouts statewide were white, 36 percent were Hispanic, 15.5 percent were African American, 3.3 percent were Asian, 26.5 percent were students with disabilities, 12.4 percent were limited English proficient, and 56.4 percent were low income.
- 68.8 percent of 12th graders who dropped out and 46.8 percent of 11th graders who dropped out during the 2010-11 school year had already earned their Competency Determination (had already met the MCAS graduation requirement).

For more information on the graduation rate, look online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/gradrates/> and http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/gradrates.aspx. For additional information on the annual dropout rate, including school and districts numbers, look online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/dropout/>.

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Governor Patrick Celebrates Encouraging MCAS Gains at Turnaround Schools Across the Commonwealth

127 Commendation Schools Named; 18 New Schools Meet AYP Target

LOWELL - Governor Deval Patrick and state education officials today released the spring 2011 school and district MCAS results and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations at the Charlotte M. Murkland Elementary School in Lowell, celebrating the strong improvement made by many of the state's 35 underperforming schools since last year.

Overall, the majority of schools statewide held their performance or improved since last year in English language arts (ELA) and Math. Statewide, 22 of the 35 underperforming ("Level 4") schools made combined gains in ELA and Math of 5 percentage points or higher in the percent of students scoring Proficient or higher between 2010 and 2011.

"I am extremely proud of the hard work and dedication these students and teachers put in every day to reach for success," said Governor Patrick. "The gains exhibited at Murkland Elementary demonstrate that when we focus efforts on providing schools with the tools they need, our students will rise to the challenge and progress will be made in closing achievement gaps."

An intense focus on redesigning chronically underperforming schools is a key part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's education reform efforts. The state's 35 most persistently low performing schools were designated as so-called "Level 4" schools in March 2010 under the state's new accountability and assistance framework and became eligible for federal aid and state support to bring about dramatic improvements in student performance through new school designs, improved instructional support and stronger leadership. This new framework is helping to place the state's lowest performing schools on a path to success, so all students can receive the education and the opportunities they deserve.

"The first-year results for the Commonwealth's underperforming schools are largely positive," said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester. "Prior to the 2010-2011 school year, these 35 schools were stuck, with low achievement and no clear improvement trend. Two-thirds of the schools increased achievement last year, whether compared to their prior record or to the statewide results. It is clear that low performance is not pre-ordained. When school districts take on the status quo, they are able to secure better outcomes for students."

The Level 4 schools with the biggest combined increase in the percent of students scoring Proficient and Advanced between 2010 and 2011, all grades combined, were:

- Charlotte M. Murkland, Lowell: up 13 percentage points in ELA; up 20 in math
- Homer Street, Springfield: up 12 in ELA; up 20 in math
- Alfred G. Zanetti, Springfield: up 11 in ELA; up 20 in math
- Elias Brookings, Springfield: up 12 in ELA; up 18 in math
- E J Harrington, Lynn: up 14 in ELA; up 14 in math
- John F Kennedy, Boston: up 9 in ELA; up 18 in math
- Orchard Gardens, Boston: up 10 in ELA; up 16 in math
- William P Connery, Lynn: up 12 in ELA; up 12 in math
- Elihu Greenwood, Boston: up 12 in ELA; up 8 in math
- Chandler Elementary, Worcester: up 7 in ELA; up 12 in math

"I applaud the hard work of our students, teachers and administrators and, in particular, the accomplishments of the Murkland Elementary School, which we celebrate today," said Secretary of Education Paul Reville. "Governor Patrick has been a forceful advocate for ensuring that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. The Murkland Elementary and many schools across the Commonwealth are proving that the Governor's vision is achievable with hard work and the right supports."

At the Murkland School, the leadership team has implemented tiered instruction that focused on supports for English language learners, effective instruction with an emphasis on student discourse, and aligned curriculum that emphasizes lesson objectives, quality of questioning, and continua of development related to content and learning. The school's principal also introduced a "morning meeting" when he arrived last year to ensure that students in every classroom understand the expectations for the day and their performance.

"We are proud of the growth at the Murkland School, and I congratulate each member of the team and the students and their families," said Lowell Public Schools Superintendent Jean Franco. "The progress at Murkland is a direct result of the focused strategic planning of a great many contributors at the state and district level, our teacher's union, the school-based leadership team, and the daily hard work of teachers, staff, and students. The Murkland School team responded to the challenge tirelessly, and their work has not only impacted their students but has assisted the entire district's redesign efforts."

Commendation Schools

Based on the 2011 MCAS and AYP results, 127 "Commendation" schools were recognized for their success in narrowing proficiency gaps for high needs students over a two-year period, demonstrating median growth of 60 or higher for two consecutive years, or exiting their NCLB Accountability Status.

Adequate Yearly Progress

Commissioner Chester today also released school and district AYP determinations, which measure progress toward annual performance targets in ELA and Math as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. In 2011, a total of 18 schools made AYP for the second consecutive year and exited their accountability status. The 18 schools that exited status this year are located in the following 16 districts: Billerica (Billerica Memorial High School); Boston (Dante Alighieri School, James Otis School, New Mission High School); Concord (Concord Middle School); Easthampton (Neil A. Pepin School); Harvard (Harvard Elementary School); Leverett (Leverett Elementary School); Lowell (Charles W. Morey School); Medway (Medway Middle School); Milton (Glover School); North Andover (Thomson School); Norwell (William G. Vinal School); Norwood (F A Cleveland School); Quincy (Squantum School); Blackstone-Millville (John F. Kennedy Elementary School); Gill-Montague (Gill Elementary School); and Nashoba (Mary Rowlandson Elementary School).

The Murkland Elementary School was one of four underperforming ("Level 4") schools in 2011 – including the William P. Connery School in Lynn and the Homer Street and Alfred G. Zanetti Schools in Springfield – to make AYP in both ELA and Math in the aggregate and all subgroups.

According to the 2011 AYP determinations, 1,404 schools (82 percent) and 354 districts (91 percent) did not make AYP in 2011, up from 1,141 schools (67 percent) and 316 districts (79 percent) in 2010. Of those schools and districts not making AYP for two or more years consecutively, 1,089 schools (64 percent) and 151 districts (39 percent) were identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. This is an increase since last year, when 971 schools (56 percent) and 123 districts (32 percent) were identified. Schools and districts that are identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring are required to take steps to focus efforts on improving student performance.

For more information on MCAS or to view school or district results, look online at http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/mcas.aspx or <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/>. For more information on AYP, go to <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp>.