

THE EQUITY PROCESS

Central Berkshire Regional School District Dalton, MA Equity Audit Report

August 2022



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Humanity

Politics TM

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As educators, it is important that we continue to serve our youth throughout their academic careers with a mirror by representing the diversified populations that we serve. This equity audit was a direct reflection of the effort, interest, and ability to improve and build an inclusive culture within the Central Berkshire Regional School District (CBRSD). The members of The Equity Process (TEP) engaged CBRSD's Equity Committee, staff, students, and leadership team to examine which systems and structures serve the current needs of the community and which do not. TEP's main goal was to create an alignment between the stated, written, and observable needs of the community.

CBRSD has a very homogeneous student population with fewer than ten percent of its students identifying as Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and more than ninety percent of its students identifying as White (Non-Hispanic). This audit also represents the demonstrated desire for CBRSD to become more diverse and inclusive in the classrooms as expressed by students and families. Together, The Equity Process, Superintendent Leslie Blake-Davis, her leadership team, and Equity Committee members, were key stakeholders in supporting the actualization of this report. The Equity Process thanks the participants who shared their thoughts and opinions while navigating tough and courageous conversations. By looking through an equitable, compassionate, mindful, and humble lens, we were able to collaboratively conduct imperative work through an objective approach.

Lastly, a special thank you to the CBRSD community for trusting The Equity Process to analyze your community carefully and compassionately without limits. In the honor of your trust, vulnerability, and candor we offer you this audit as a tool to aid in the next steps of creating a community that works on behalf of the students, families, and staff of the CBRSD.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Berkshire Regional School District engaged with The Equity Process, LLC as a way of setting priorities for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) throughout its schools at a systems-level. During the process, TEP sought to ensure that CBRSD's core policies, practices, and procedures were in alignment with their commitment to serve their current and future diverse learning communities.

Eager to undertake the work in a systematic way, CBRSD contracted with TEP to conduct an equity audit to help guide the District forward and provide expertise on how to be proactive vs. reactive in the event of bias and harm against members of its entire community, while centering minority groups. The audit was conducted through a series of steps to gather information and evidence. In phases TEP conducted two focus groups, 1:1 interviews, survey data, a review of policies, processes, and procedures, a visit to the District's schools, publicly available data and ongoing meetings with District leaders. Seven-hundred and eighty-six participants from CBRSD contributed to the audit process. TEP reviewed publicly available data on students, staff, and the School Committee. TEP also facilitated discussions with the Equity Taskforce and leadership team members to understand how equitable and inequitable practices present and affect students. During several meetings, interviews and conversations, stakeholders were actively engaged in discussions around changes that needed to occur within their school communities, as well as the opportunities to sustain current best practices.

The audit for CBRSD is organized into sections structured through a process of inquiry relating to relationships, engagement of staff and students, challenging learning and situations, impact of practices, and policies, instructional expectations of their graduates as well as inclusion for **ALL**.

While maintaining a focus on social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion as seen through the lens of a sampling of stakeholder groups, we examined the current state of the District. As you review each section you will notice that it is primarily a straightforward presentation of narratives and data. As such, this document is intended to provide summaries and analysis of the data, alongside a set of recommendations based upon our findings. In most cases, historical data was readily available.

The resulting recommendations are broken into segments, which you will find at the end of each section. All recommendations, including The North Star recommendations, address overall organizational goals along with suggested strategies particular to each domain. Furthermore, we believe that the onus for implementing change should be shared widely amongst staff, students, families, and community stakeholders as much as possible and with transparency. Shared leadership, mentorship of new staff and courageous action are necessary skills and steps needed to fulfill the recommendations offered in this document.

A common behavior noticed throughout our time within CBRSD was a consistent emotional response to the needs of the community, which was not always positive. The Equity Process hopes to enhance those behaviors by offering recommendations that limit empathetic distress for all. We offer a narrative through our recommendations that can lead to collaborative, intentional, strategic, and student-centered actions. These actions can create focused opportunities for the CBRSD community to operate proactively, preventatively, and compassionately as a system while centering, celebrating, and supporting its most vulnerable populations.

For the sake of our time in the District we thought of empathy as being able to feel what another person is feeling or feeling for that person because of their experience(s).



Upon our exit from the District, we'd recommend that you shift towards thinking compassionately by thinking of compassion as one of your new narratives. Compassion is being able to feel what another person is feeling or feeling for that person because of their experience(s) **PLUS** the desire to act and support them in a way or ways that serve both them and you.



Our Why

Ubuntu, the Zulu word for HUMANITY, and its principles will sustain us during our most celebrated and challenging times while we journey together. Here at The Equity Process, we believe in Umoja and Ujima/Ujamaa, the Swahili words for Unity, Collective Work, and Responsibility! These two principles center our work. We aim to disrupt racist and biased practices and policies that create inequities in common spaces. We are here because we believe in your community and you do, too!

Our Mission

Through social and academic discourse, coaching, leadership and the implementation of research and evidenced-based practices, our mission is to create a symbiotic relationship between equity, anti-biases, and cultural inclusivity.

We focus on incorporating systems and structures that allow our clients to foster positive relations and relationships with people of all races, cultures, ethnicities, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, abilities, genders, and sexual orientations to create learning environments wherein all people feel valued and welcomed. Equity is not simply about access. It is also about honoring each other as humans in the most compassionate, mindful, and humble ways.

Project Team Members

This audit was conducted and led by The Equity Process, LLC's team members:

Cyndi Weekes Bradley - Auditor, Editor, Founder and CEO

Cacia Weekes-Christopher - Auditor, Senior Project Manager and Technology Specialist

Kyeesha Clayborn - Auditor and Regional Contact

Alpha Sanford - Auditor

Denise Wolk - Auditor and Editor

Consultant

Dr. Gabriella Garcia - Reviewer



What Should You Know About the Equity Audit?

The Equity Process is dedicated to incorporating structures that allow our clients to foster positive, safe, brave, courageous, and intellectual relationships with people of all races, cultures, ethnicities, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, abilities, genders, and sexual orientations. It is our objective to co-establish environments where all people feel valued and welcomed to benefit all stakeholders with an emphasis on students' needs.

This equity audit was informed by using research and evidence-based tools used specifically to gather data on the Central Berkshire Regional School District's community at large. Through our work, we have been able to discover and uncover information regarding both equitable and inequitable practices within the CBRSD System.

The RECI Philosophy® is equity in compassionate, mindful, and humble action! It is one of the frameworks used to conduct our equity audits. The framework is student centered and measures transferable skills across datasets, human behaviors, observations, and interactions, as well as maintaining a core objective lens at all levels of the audit.

We believe that building sustainable and authentic relationships with students fosters trust leading to their engagement. Engagement and trust give students the confidence and desire to rise to the challenging lessons of their classrooms. It offers the adults data that leads to best instructional and socioemotional practices. Thus, leading to the creation of an environment for authentic and culturally inclusive student success for each student. During the audit, The Equity Process collected data and information by working closely with the District's superintendent and designees.

In summary, the equity audit is a comprehensive benchmarking tool that assesses, remarks, and provides recommendations to support a more inclusive school environment for **ALL**. It has a strong focus on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion for school communities.

While we recognize that many outcomes of strong Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) work can't necessarily be measured or quantified, we do believe that there are key metrics throughout our research and evidence-based processes that serve as reliable indicators of progress, areas for concern and/or point to directional trends.

Key Vocabulary

All – 100% of CBRSD stakeholders or students depending upon context.

BIPOC – Black Indigenous and People of Color.

Cultural Inclusivity – A pedagogy grounded in mutual awareness, acceptance, and actions of bringing together people of all ages and levels of society both in and out of the classroom.

DEI – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Diverse Learning Communities - Learning communities that support collaborative partnerships between students and staff to restructure curriculum to address structural barriers to educational excellence. They are inclusive of all races, ethnicities, genders, creeds, sexual orientations, and abilities.

Diversity – The practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social, racial, and ethnic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations, abilities, etc.

Diversity Hiring – Hiring based on merit with exceptional care taken to ensure procedures have reduced biases related to a candidate's age, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and other personal characteristics that are unrelated to their job performance.

Equity – The quality of being fair and impartial to all while having the wherewithal needed to gain and or offer access and entry to opportunities without barriers against abilities, races, genders, ages, sexual orientations, religions, etc.

Equality – The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities.

Global Lens – The practices, understanding and outlook of belonging, diversity, equity and inclusion that fosters a mutual respect across cultures locally, nationally and internationally to focus on the unique authenticity of deepening our connections to the current and future world.

Inclusion – The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of other minority groups.

JEDI – Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Microaggression - Indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group.

Racial Equity – A process and outcome. As an outcome, we achieve racial equity when race no longer determines one's socioeconomic outcomes; when everyone has what they need to thrive, no matter the color of their skin. As a process, we apply racial equity when those most impacted by structural racial inequities are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives.

RECI^{III}® – Relationships, engagement, impact, instruction, and inclusion through equity in action in a compassionate and mindful way. The **RECI^{III} Philosophy™** is equity in compassionate and mindful action! We believe that building sustainable and authentic relationships with students foster trust. That trust leads to their engagement. That engagement and trust gives students

the confidence and desire to rise to the challenging lessons of their classrooms. It offers the adults data that leads to best instructional and socio-emotional practices. Thus, the creation of an environment for authentic and culturally inclusive student success for each student in our care.

Datasets Requested

- Policies, procedures, practices, and plans
- Handbooks
- School websites
- CBRSD - Opportunity to visit in-person
- Opportunity to engage stakeholders with District support
- Core values of the schools and district
- CBRSD's professional development plan
- Blind District-wide evaluation feedback
- Community vibe (e.g., a sense of belonging) both within and outside of CBRSD

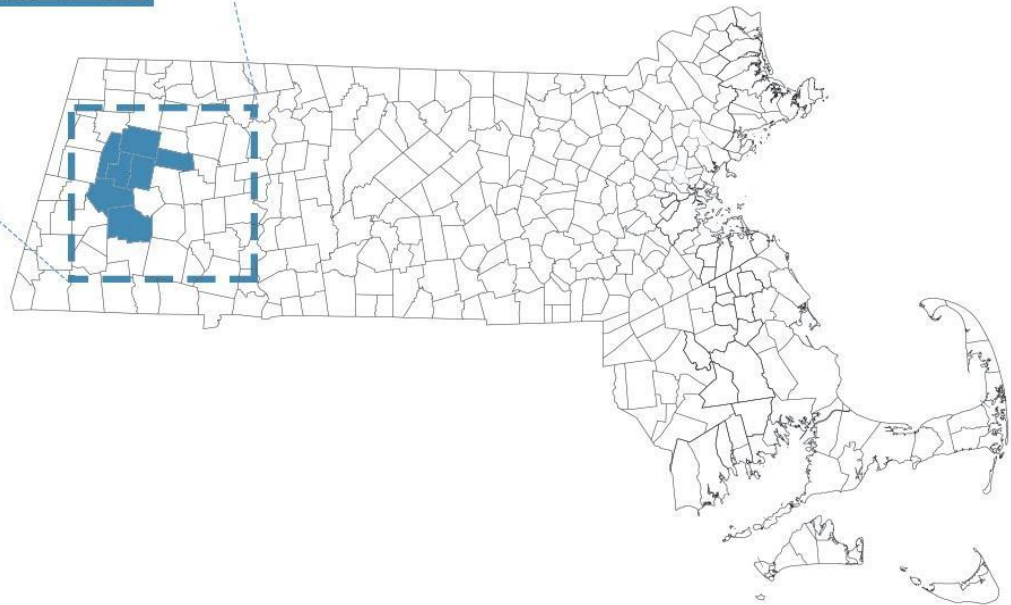
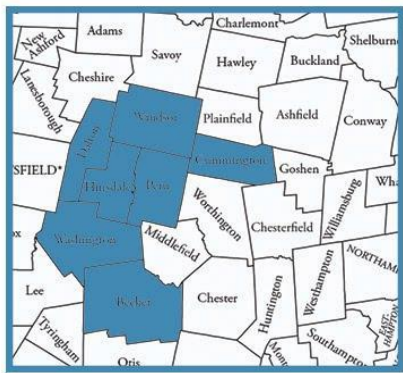
Datasets Reviewed

- Policies, procedures, and practices
- Handbooks
- School observation day
- School websites
- Core values of the schools
- DRAFT strategic plan
- CBRSD's Professional Development Plans
- Student data via DESE public profiles
- Blind District wide evaluation feedback
- Community vibe (e.g., a sense of belonging) both within and outside of CBRSD
- Publicly available information from various websites

Welcome to Western Massachusetts

Home of the Central Berkshire Regional School District

The Central Berkshire Regional School District member towns are Becket, Cummington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington, and Windsor
District Offices are in **Dalton**, MA



CENTRAL BERKSHIRE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY

The Central Berkshire Regional School District is the largest school District in the Commonwealth by area covering more than 214 square miles in western Massachusetts. It serves seven towns, with six in Berkshire County: Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington, Becket, and Windsor with Cummington in Hampshire County.ⁱ

According to data reported for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years in US News and World Report, the student body at the schools served by Central Berkshire is 90.5% White, 0.3% Black, 0.6% Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.7% Hispanic/Latino, 0.2% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. In addition, 3.6% of students are two or more races, and 0% have not specified their race or ethnicity. 48% of students are female, and 52% of students are male. At schools in Central Berkshire, 35% of students are eligible to participate in the federal free and reduced-price meal programⁱⁱ and 0.4% of students are English language learners.ⁱⁱⁱ There has been slight changes to the demographical data for the 2021-2022 school year. The most notable changes show a slight increase in students who are eligible to participate in FRL (44%). Also, a slight decrease in students who identify as White (89.1%).

Within Central Berkshire, 100.0% of teachers are licensed and 100.0% have three or more years of experience. The student-to-teacher ratio is higher than the state average, at 13:1. The District has 4-full-time counselors on staff.^{iv}

According to the 2020 Census Bureau report, the population within the District is 13,466 with an average age of 51-years old. 94% of the population identifies as white, 2.5% Hispanic, 2% two or more races, and less than 2% of the population is Black, Native American or of Asian descent. Median household income is \$72,154 with 7.4% living below the poverty line including 8.4% of all children falling into that category (this is below the state average of 12.2%). 82% of the population lives in owner-occupied houses, and the median home value is about \$250,400. Nearly 95% of adults have a high school diploma, and nearly 39% have a four-year college degree or higher.

CENTRAL BERKSHIRE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



The Central Berkshire Regional School District provides education to the students of the seven member towns of the region, as well as students through the School Choice Program. The Central Berkshire Regional School District member towns are Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington, Becket, Cummington, and Windsor. There are approximately 1,535 students who attend school in one of five schools:

Becket Washington Elementary (PK-5), Kittredge Elementary (PK-5), Craneville Elementary (K-5), Nessacus Regional Middle School (6-8) and Wahconah Regional High School (9-12).

Mission, Vision, and Values

MISSION

The mission of CBRSD is to ensure that every student meets the highest possible educational standards so that they may become responsible citizens able to meet the demands of a diverse and ever-changing society.

VISION

The vision of CBRSD states that the District will provide an inclusive educational environment for all learners to attain social, emotional, and academic success.

VALUES

- CBRSD is a Learning Environment for all
- CBRSD prioritizes students first in all decision making
- CBRSD promotes global awareness and local appreciation
- CBRSD prepares students for ongoing success as lifelong learners able to successfully pursue areas of passion
- CBRSD partners with all stakeholders on behalf of student learning

Recommendation

- With your stakeholders as part of the process, co-create K-12 Look-Fors that represent each area above in action.

Purpose

The Equity Process examined various structures, policies, and procedures through a RECI® lens. Our goal was to investigate, interrogate, and capture evidence of alignment and misalignment of systems that support the district’s mission statement, core verbalized values and practices that support learning and teaching.

Summary

DISTRICT-WIDE

Please note that during the time of our review the Policy Sub-Committee was also updating policies. TEP reviewed the most current and complete school handbooks, District-wide policies, strategic plans, and School Committee policies. We believe that listing every detail might be overwhelming, however, there was a central theme observed throughout the review process.

Based on our review, handbooks, plans, and manuals appeared to be a system of organizational structure. There were many clearly articulated plans and processes for action, but we found that many policies were outdated through the lens of a 21st Century global outlook. Also lacking, was a focus of social-emotional support as the pandemic has placed a heavy burden on students, families, and staff.

Several handbooks called for an exorbitant amount of time to be spent on homework without consideration for what is developmentally appropriate, particularly considering the burdens posed by the pandemic. We found that many of the policies that have a direct impact on students were more likely to be written through the lens of compliance and offer a punitive response to “frowned upon” student behaviors. They were also adult centered. Many policies appear to be transactional and technical versus being mutual or adaptive. There are some caveats to that, however.

There is a District-wide approach to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Each school has a set of values that guide their community. While demonstrated in their handbooks, this was also visible during our visit to the District schools in March of 2022. Additionally, in some handbooks, the schools’ schedules were present, and staff were named in an effort to foster a home to school connection.

Recommendation

- CBRSD stakeholders have varying cultures and values, include stakeholders in creating a new narrative for handbooks, plans and manuals. The new narrative should reflect their voices, 21st Century global expectations for teaching and learning, MTSS supports for

students, families, and staff and continuation of current Restorative Practices and updates.

TEACHING AND LEARNING: FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS

Purpose

The Equity Process conducted a series of facilitated discussions with District leaders, school-based leaders, teachers, parents, community members and students to learn about their first-hand perceptions and experiences through a RECIII® lens.

Summary

Focus groups were conducted with two small groups composed of diverse CBRSD stakeholders and 1:1 leadership interviews. The questions we explored were designed to address key areas, which included but were not limited to the following: years worked within/with the District, evidence of equitable practices, support, and capacity to execute potential recommendations through the lens of the **RECIII Framework®**.

We prepared our questions to focus on leadership, teaching, and learning, as well as JEDI practices and culture within CBRSD. The information that follows represents the perspectives of participants from a microcosmic perspective. Although TEP will not share personal information of those who participated, below you will find a sampling of responses from various participants.

THE FULL COMPLEMENT OF RECIII®-BASED QUESTIONS

Relationship Building

- Do you believe that staff create a sense of positive energy and openness to students in the classroom?
- Do you believe that opportunities exist for children to build relationships with other peers in the classroom?

Engaging

- Do you believe that all students have choices and opportunities to express his/her/their needs and opinions in class(es)?

Challenging

- Do the materials (books, etc.) and teaching methods encourage students to use critical thinking and higher-order learning skills on a regular basis?

Impact

- How are students impacted by the current ways of teaching and learning in CBRSD?

Instruction

- The instructional strategies used in students' classes allow for student interaction and expression. Do you Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with that statement?

Inclusion

- Do you believe that all students feel a sense of belonging in his/her/their classes and within the greater school community?
- I believe that 100% of the classrooms and public areas in the schools are warm, welcoming, and safe spaces for all community members. Do you Agree or Disagree with that statement?

A SAMPLING OF RESPONSES

Do you believe that staff create a sense of positive energy and openness to students in the classroom?

- "Teacher by teacher basis, but to say yes overall would be wrong. I don't know if every teacher has the capacity to create those relationships. That's coming from a teacher at the high school but also as a mom."
- "It depends on their biases, and they have the best intent, but the impact isn't coming out as positive or inclusive."
- "Every teacher has the intention of wanting to be open and real with students. But I'm not sure they all do and I'm not sure they all know how to."
- "Relationships are the core of what teachers do. If not, how do we have a foundation? If the teacher is able to understand, feel, care, love, be mindful, and compassionate for the student, the color doesn't matter but if the teacher is unable to do so then color matters."

Do you believe that opportunities exist for children to build relationships with other children in the classroom?

- "Teachers feel pressured to focus on the curriculum over the relationships with their students because it's what the school wants."

- “Well, if we are being self-aware then the answer is no. Self-awareness is something that we can all work on and we are having conversations. Not every child is able to build a relationship with a teacher and their peers but there are many factors that go into that.”
- “I think COVID-19 has made this struggle even harder. Because it's hard to get them close together and we know that proximity is sometimes needed for kids to make those relationships.”
- “Because of COVID-19 we should teach kids how to use collaborative appropriate language with each other rather than relying on proximity.”
- “Once these cliques form it is hard for other children to be accepted into those groups.”

Do you believe that all students have choices and opportunities to express his/her/their needs and opinions in class(es)?

- “I don’t think it's happening at every classroom and every level. But it is a lot of the same teachers that do relationship building who do allow opportunities for their students to have and form their own opinions in class.”
- “It's a hard question because in what respect do students get to have a voice in what they're learning? If they are learning math, then there really isn't much opinion that can be given since that subject is pretty structured and straightforward.”
- “It has to be purposeful, and you have to set it up for success. It can't be hazardous, there needs to be thought put into the methods of communication for the students to get into each other. It can't be a simple ‘turn and talk to a peer’ it has to be more meaningful than that or they won't be engaged.”
- “As a mom I have not seen a lot of room for student choice or room for a lot of their voices to be heard. But as a teacher I know that it is hard to be collaborative when the school wants something completely different than the students. Who do we listen to? Our students or our Administration?”
- “If you create that sort of relationship in the classroom then you will get that feedback from your students but if you don't create that relationship then you will never know their needs or opinions because you haven't created that safe space for them to do so.”

Do the materials (books, etc.) and teaching methods allow students to use critical thinking and higher-order learning skills on a regular basis?

- “It all depends on the child if they feel like they can stand up and assert themselves despite the challenges of the teachers. The students have to feel like they are okay to voice their opinions and needs. It’s a mix between the teacher’s atmosphere, what they allow and what the children are willing to fight for.”

- “I’ve seen a big shift over the years that is more skill-based learning as opposed to memorization. So as an educator I’ve embraced that while there are still teachers who rely on old learning styles that the skill-based learning style is more effective when it comes to student understanding.”
- “We can’t switch this. If we hang onto old curriculum and old ways of habits, then we will be stuck, and our students will be stuck as well.”
- “There is a shift between elementary to high school, somehow it stops once we get to middle school and starts back again in high school. “
- “Preparing the students for global society.”

How are students impacted by the current ways of teaching and learning in CBRSD?

- “How do we define a positive impact? Is it by getting into college? One of the things I’m hoping for is a heightened awareness of the world around them and they’ll bring their learning and knowledge in CBRSD and their academic journey with them outside of school.”
- “We try to think of new concepts and new ways to improve. Having support and knowing you have support allows us to create bigger impacts for students.”
- “As a teacher I want to feel more supported in teaching things that we haven’t been comfortable teaching before. Like two of our standards are social justice and emotional learning but we don’t incorporate that a lot, I want these things so that we can make bigger impacts.”
- “If I had to classify the impact as negative or positive, I would say the students are impacted in a positive way in some shape or form.”
- “Disabled students, being unable to go on certain field trips and being able to participate in normal school activities isn’t okay.”

The instructional strategies used in my child’s class allow for student interaction and expression. Do you Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree or Strongly Disagree with that statement?

- “Somewhat Agree,” was a response that was the most common response shared.
- “I somewhat agree. At times, I feel for the high school students that are engaged and able to connect to the things that are happening in real time, the critical thinking tells me that there’s something stimulating the mind. In my middle schooler, it’s more about the progress. I can’t say yes because across the board you can never say 100% but I will say it’s there.”
- “Strongly Agree,” was a response shared twice.

- *“Somewhat Disagree,” was a response shared twice.*

Do you believe that all students feel a sense of belonging in his/her/their classes and within the wider school community?

- “No,” was the response of many participants.
- “No, I think we are making strides and working really hard but again it's class by class.”
- “Key word strides, we are moving towards the mark but are we there yet? No. I think it's the advocacy that's happening behind the scenes. I advocate ferociously because we are not there yet. However, I have seen great demonstrations of ally ships by our students. Which tells me that there's a younger faction rising up against a lot of things.”
- “Unnoticed disabilities aren't accepted or included. However, more noticeable disabilities are more included. So, if it's not documented or can't be seen, that child doesn't get the support they need.”
- “Kids are still afraid to talk about race and they don't know how to do it. However, they are trying, and they are learning. We have to give them more opportunities and teachers too.”

I believe that 100% of the classrooms and public areas in the schools are warm, welcoming, and safe spaces for all community members? Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree with that statement?

- *“Strongly Disagree, I will say that our school specifically is NOT a safe place for LGBTQIA+.”*
- “Strongly Disagree, we need more support from administration. Right now, I’m going to put an emphasis on the principals and the superintendent who are no doubt trying, but they do receive a lot of push back from the community. So, there isn't much for the admins to do or change without some kind of domino or catalyst.”
- “I'm not sure, Somewhat Agree, maybe. I’ve been in situations where I've had to advocate for students and administration has supported me in doing so. However, thinking about this country and this District it's frightening to know that the marginalized communities won't ever feel 100% welcomed. So, I am glad that the superintendent and the principals are so supportive in trying to change that in our schools.”
- “Somewhat Disagree, as teachers we try to create a safe and welcoming space for our students but because humans are complicated, we don't always end up demonstrating our intentions well enough. I also know that students feel and see it whenever we hesitate to be inclusive.”

Recommendations

- Provide more opportunities for students and staff to honor, build, learn, and explore varied areas of equity through a global lens.
- Provide students with a curriculum that shares the life experiences of all populations who have been marginalized in the United States, especially given the historical context of the Indigenous history within your area.
- Provide staff with PD that is relevant to directly support any curriculum that includes global and cultural diversity.
- Create stakeholder focus groups to hear what they'd like to learn more about and incorporate those ideas into daily lessons.
- Ensure that all leadership staff review this section of the audit in particular as they learn more about the needs of their current populations.
- Create opportunities for families to be informed and involved in understanding the current and future offerings of school-based curriculum. Think about offering a Curriculum Night where families can embody their children's daily classroom experiences.

Purpose

The Equity Process examined various policies, procedures, and strategies for teaching and learning through a RECIII® lens using our formal protocol during Observation Day in CRBSD. Our goal was to observe and capture evidence of alignment and misalignment of systems that support the District's mission statement, core verbalized values and core practices that support learning and teaching. While we were unable to formally visit all classrooms due to in-district concerns, we visited some classrooms where teachers were very inviting. We walked the corridors and visited all public spaces of the five regional schools: Becket Washington Elementary (PK-5), Kittredge Elementary (PK-5), Craneville Elementary (K-5), Nessacus Regional Middle School (6-8) and Wahconah Regional High School (9-12).

Summary

On March 28, 2022, The Equity Process met with the District's Superintendent, and the Head of Facilities. The purpose of the meeting was to visit five of the District's schools. Also, to provide feedback on the buildings' overall conditions. The five schools that were visited were the: Becket Washington Elementary (PK-5), Kittredge Elementary (PK-5), Craneville Elementary (K-5), Nessacus Regional Middle School (6-8) and Wahconah Regional High School (9-12). Although the buildings' site visits were limited to a general walk through and discussions with the school leaders, visits were organized and allowed room for TEP to capture a sense of each school's culture. In addition, the buildings appeared to be well maintained and in overall good physical condition. No major physical deficiencies were noted upon preliminary observations during our visits.

WAHCONAH HIGH SCHOOL

When entering Wahconah High School, TEP immediately noticed a sign that read *"Please take responsibility for the energy you bring into this space. Your words matter. Your actions matter."* That motto provided an immediate sense of community-accountability from our perspective. While walking the hallways, we noticed that community mattered, from the classrooms to the pods being organized and structured to promote a shared workspace, experiences, and collegiality. The cafeteria design allowed students to have an open concept similar to a modern college cafeteria. We noticed learning taking place both in and out of the classrooms both through a formal and informal lens.

Each learning area promoted a theme of community. We observed students utilizing the spaces collaboratively while working on their assignments reinforced evidence of RECIII. Regarding *being responsible for the energy you bring*; it is worthwhile to note that students were

welcoming and friendly towards us. The administration appeared to be creating a culture that promotes positive energy within the high school and amongst students and faculty as well.

Wahconah's administration emphasized ways they plan to promote student growth to become productive citizens in their community. They also discussed how their programs provides students with opportunities to grow individually and explore in a safe space.

NESSACUS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Our visit to Nessacus Middle School offered a chance to notice students' interactions and behaviors in the hallways. We also had an opportunity to speak to the administration more closely. On our Observation Day at Nessacus we did not visit and classrooms. Our time was mainly spent touring the building and observing community spaces.

Based on our observations the principal of Nessacus appeared to know his students well. We observed many reciprocal positive interactions between him and students. There were many instances of joyous interactions observed. We saw laughter, greetings by name, close and appropriate proximal interactions, encouraging and affirming statements, and more. We heard teaching and learning taking place in each classroom, which we slowly passed with the intention of capturing a sense of what was happening in the classrooms. What we noticed in the classrooms from a doorway's distance were many students sat in rows and teachers remained at the front of the classroom teaching. We must mention, the observations were short (less than 10-minutes) and informal. We also noticed many positive messages shared through art murals on walls. While the messages were appropriate for today, the paint and images were aged. We did notice several blank bulletin boards, as well.

BECKET WASHINGTON, KITTREDGE, AND CRANEVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Walking the halls of the elementary schools and visiting several of their classrooms was a model experience. We noticed from one school to the next a unified experience with a few exceptions. We observed students actively engaged in their classes. At all three schools, teachers were observed as being versatile in their teaching methods and attentive to students' needs. They moved seamlessly throughout the classrooms from being in front of the classroom and providing instruction; to moving to individual students or smaller groups. In all three schools, hallways displayed an assortment of student work. This demonstrated students' creative thinking and emotional awareness of their surroundings, as well as their learning. We also noticed positive student to student interactions, as well as students welcoming our TEP team.

We noticed many classrooms had appropriately dimmed lighting or the lights turned off, which appeared to aid in creating a calm learning environment. Windows allowed for an abundance of natural sunlight in those rooms. We observed a diverse book selections displayed in the hallways and in the libraries of each school. This provided opportunities for all students to learn

about the lifestyles of others through a globally diverse context. It also showed a celebration of differences of diversity. Having diverse literature and resources available extended and opportunity for teachers to have diverse reading resources at their fingertips. There was something for everyone. We also saw the use of some of these materials in classrooms at each school or captured in student work displayed in the hallways, which demonstrated use of the resources.

Recommendations

- Continue to provide more opportunities for students to honor, build, learn, and explore varied areas of equity through a global lens.
- From elementary through high school, offer flexible and group seating in all classrooms to encourage collaborative learning and encourage rich student discourse.
- Provide more opportunities for formal instructional and equity-driven walkthrough rounds/learning rounds.
- Ensure student work is displayed throughout buildings.
- Maintain updated bulletin boards.
- Update wall art and murals with modern vibrancy.
- Read and seek student and family feedback. Use it to support guiding next steps.

Purpose

The purpose of the surveys was to gain deeper knowledge about the Central Berkshire Regional School District and the values of varying stakeholders in connection to the **RECI Framework®**. Survey respondents answered a series of brief statements centered around community values through relationship building, level of engagement, challenging experiences, the impact of teaching and learning, the school community, the level of global instruction and a strong sense of belonging to an inclusive environment.

TEP developed and administered surveys to gather the perspectives of the CBRSD community. Staff at all schools were offered the survey with an opportunity to complete it. In addition, surveys were offered to parents/families. At last, students at Nessacus Regional Middle School and Wahconah Regional High School were offered surveys with the ability to opt-out.

Summary

Survey questions focused on **RECI®** areas of **Relationship Building, Engagement, Challenge, Impact, Instruction, and Inclusion**. Please see the following pages in this section for the full complement of questions that were administered among participants.

Three stakeholder groups were surveyed. There was a total of 767 participants, including 88 staff some including teachers, 506 students and 173 parents and families. We are drawing out notable findings into this portion of the report based on stakeholder responses. The responses are based on the participants' perspectives and not that of TEP.

The recommendations at the end of this section includes information gathered during two focus group discussions and following survey information.

On the following pages it is important to note that the color scheme represented in the surveys were generated by the survey's platform. They hold no merit other than to define the differences amongst the varying responses. Look closely at the numbers that represent the responses of participants rather than the colors themselves for true delineation of factors.

Survey Response Color	Representation
Blue	Strongly Agree
Red	Agree
Orange	Neutral
Green	Disagree
Purple	Strongly Disagree

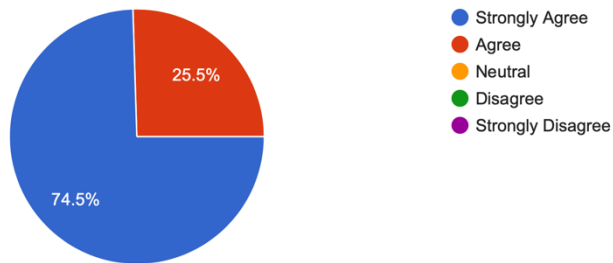
RELATIONSHIPS

Teachers, staff, and students in the elementary and middle schools generally agree that teachers provide opportunities to build relationships, but high school students do not all agree that this is the case:

Elementary staff:

Relationship Building: I create opportunities for students to build relationships with me and each other daily.

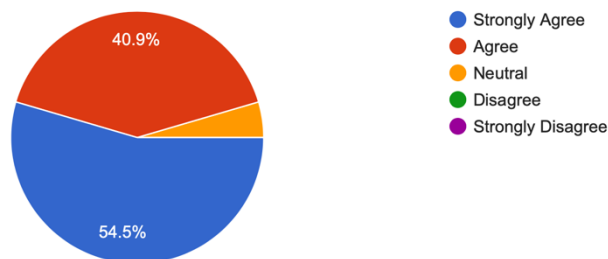
51 responses



Middle school staff:

Relationship Building: I create opportunities for students to build relationships with me and each other daily.

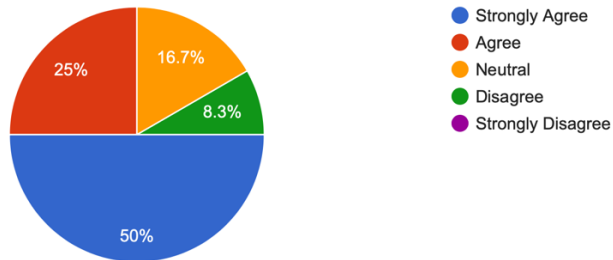
22 responses



High school staff:

Relationship Building: I create opportunities for students to build relationships with me and each other daily.

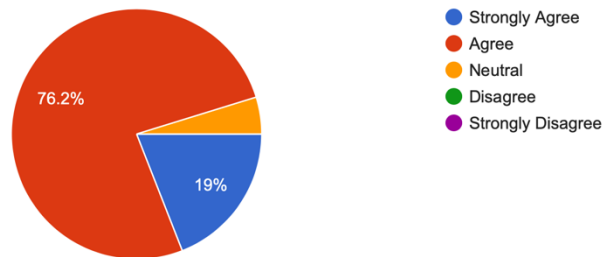
12 responses



Middle school students:

Relationship Building: My teachers offer many opportunities for students to build relationships with them and each other.

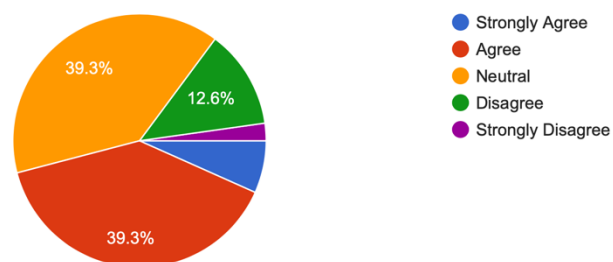
21 responses



High school students:

Relationship Building: My teachers offer many opportunities for students to build relationships with them and each other.

135 responses



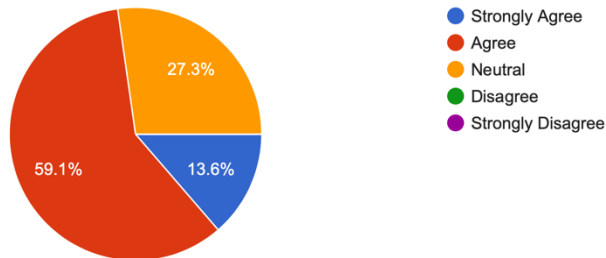
ENGAGEMENT

While elementary staff generally agree they are incorporating students' interests, voices, and choices into the curriculum and teaching methods, this wanes at the secondary level.

Middle school staff:

Engaging: Students interests are incorporated into the curriculum and/or teaching methods I used daily.

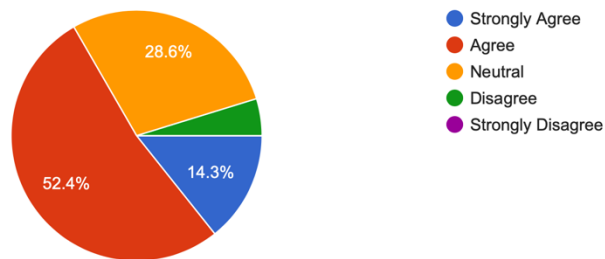
22 responses



Middle school students:

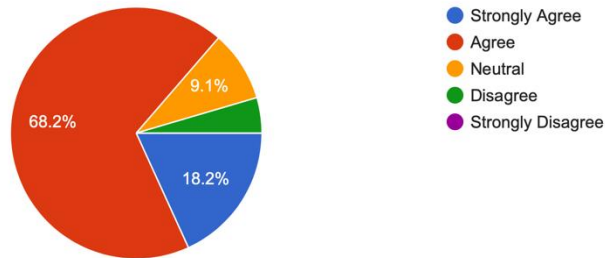
Engaging: My interests are incorporated into the curriculum and/or teaching methods in my classes.

21 responses



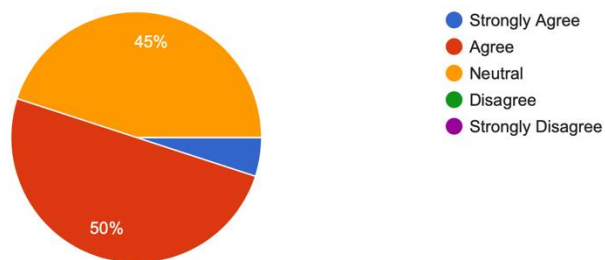
Middle school staff:

Engaging: Students have voice and choice in the learning opportunities that I offer.
22 responses



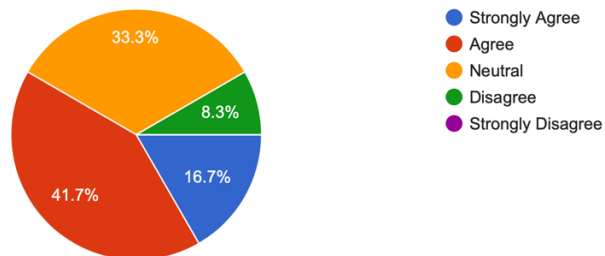
Middle school students

Engaging: I have a voice and choice in my learning daily.
20 responses



High school staff:

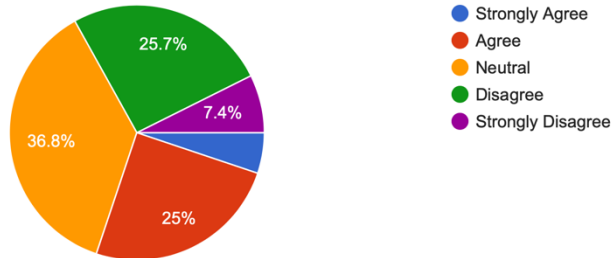
Engaging: Students interests are incorporated into the curriculum and/or teaching methods I used daily.
12 responses



High school students:

Engaging: My interests are incorporated into the curriculum and/or teaching methods in my classes.

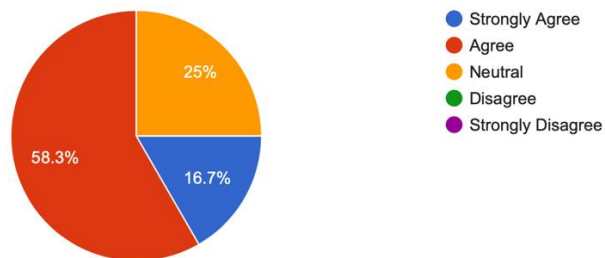
136 responses



High school staff:

Engaging: Students have voice and choice in the learning opportunities that I offer.

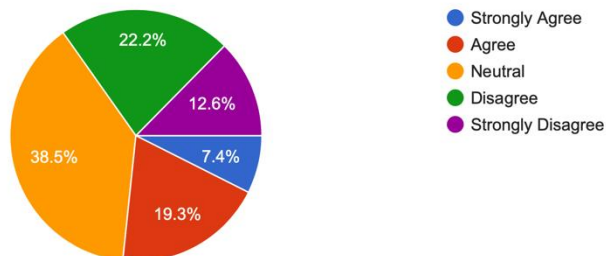
12 responses



High school students:

Engaging: I have a voice and choice in my learning daily.

135 responses



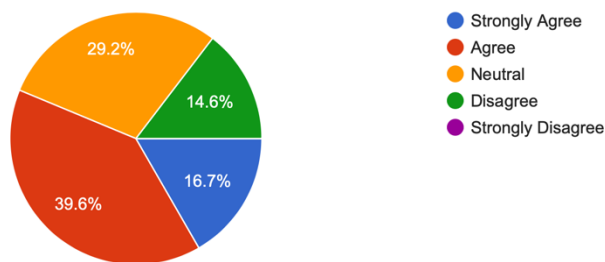
INSTRUCTION

Teachers and staff at every level who participated in the survey indicated the need for professional development/support on instructional strategies. They also communicated the need to have input and/or choice on the kind of PD they are to receive.

Elementary staff:

Instruction: Teachers and instructional staff in my school receive adequate support to use the latest instructional strategies.

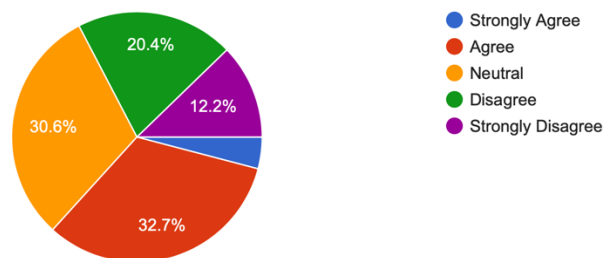
48 responses



Elementary staff:

Instruction: Teachers and instructional staff in my school have input and/or choice on the kind of professional development we receive.

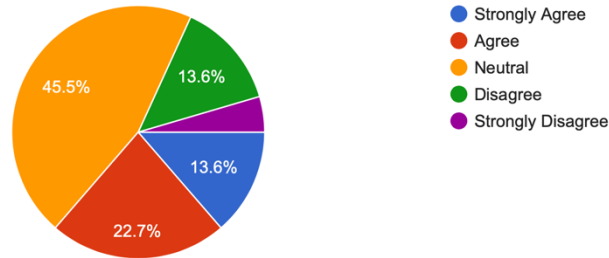
49 responses



Middle school staff:

Instruction: Teachers and instructional staff in my school receive adequate support to use the latest instructional strategies.

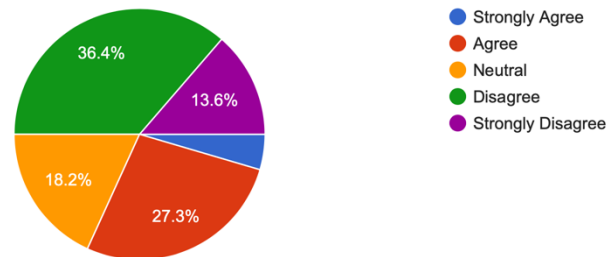
22 responses



Middle school staff:

Instruction: Teachers and instructional staff in my school have input and/or choice on the kind of professional development we receive.

22 responses



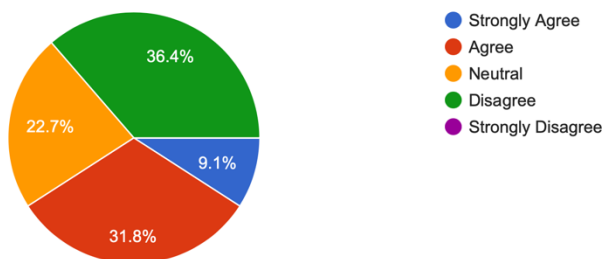
INCLUSION:

Elementary teachers and staff indicated they feel that students feel safe and included. Looking through a microcosmic lens, secondary staff responses showed concerns that are borne out by the open responses from students and parents/families at the middle and high school levels.

Middle school staff:

Inclusion: All of my students feel a sense of belonging in their classes and within the wider school community.

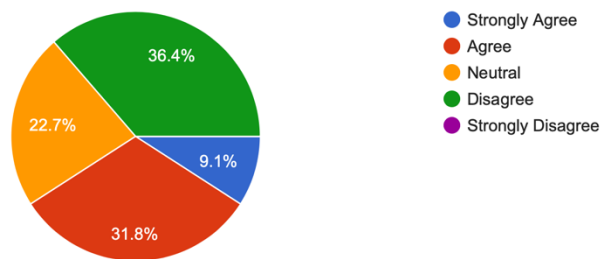
22 responses



Middle school staff:

Inclusion: The classroom environments and public areas in our school are a warm, welcoming, and safe space for 100% of our community members.

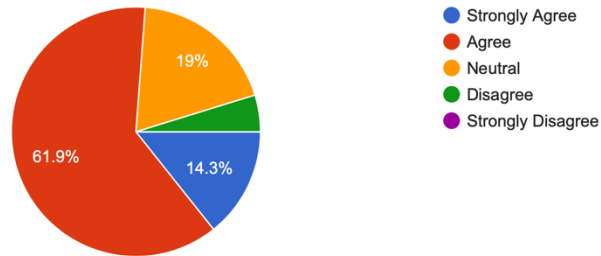
22 responses



Middle school students:

Inclusion: The classroom environments and public areas in my school are a warm, welcoming, and safe space for 100% of its community members.

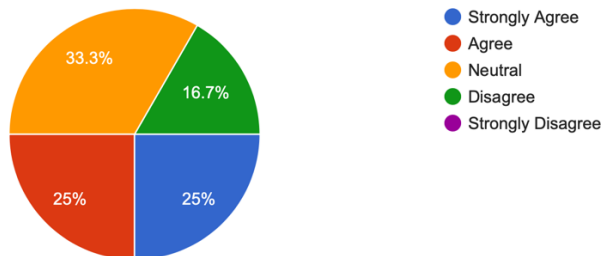
21 responses



High school staff:

Inclusion: All of my students feel a sense of belonging in their classes and within the wider school community.

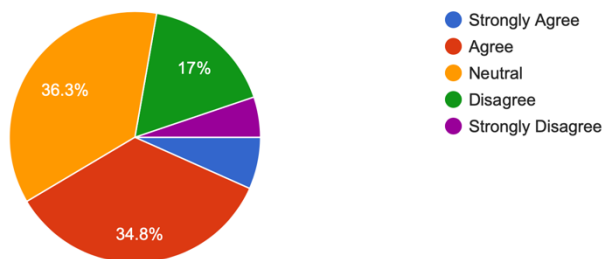
12 responses



High school students:

Inclusion: All of my friends and I feel a sense of belonging in our classes and within the wider school community.

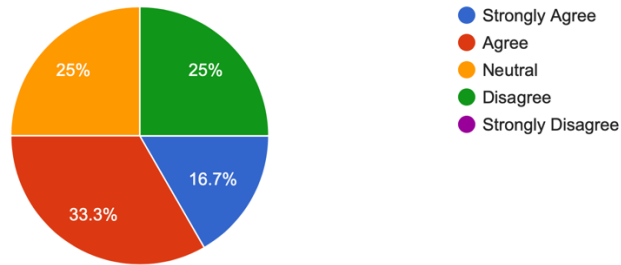
135 responses



High school staff:

Inclusion: The classroom environments and public areas in our school are a warm, welcoming, and safe space for 100% of our community members.

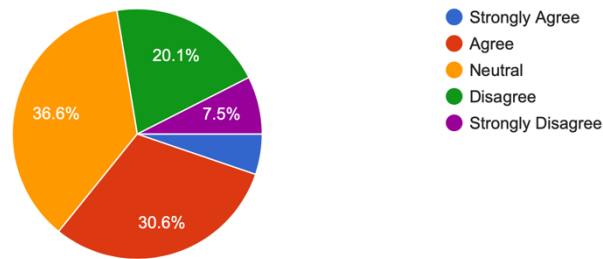
12 responses



High school students:

Inclusion: The classroom environments and public areas in my school are a warm, welcoming, and safe space for 100% of its community members.

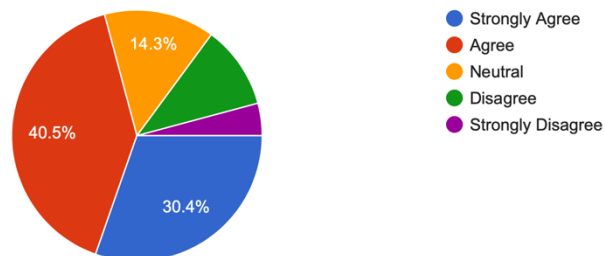
134 responses



Parents/families:

Inclusion: My child feels a sense of belonging in his/her/their classes and within the wider school community.

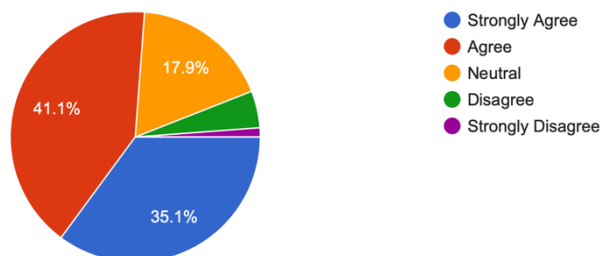
168 responses



Parents/families:

Inclusion: The classroom environments and public areas in my child's school are a warm, welcoming, and safe spaces.

168 responses



Recommendations

- Provide more intentional opportunities for students to build relationships with teachers/staff and each other at the middle and high school levels.
- Consider forming a student advisory program, particularly at the high school and middle school levels. Offer them opportunities to gain experience and grow from each other as there is one District middle school and one District high school. This can support a seamless transition from middle school to high school as well as support each school's culture.
- More hands-on, interest-based instruction that includes student voice and choice (e.g., project-based learning, personal learning plans, etcetera).
- Provide professional development opportunities for teachers and staff based on their expressed needs and interests, as well as District needs based on triangulated data.
- Provide more opportunities for families to get involved in the teaching and learning aspects of their child/children's school(s) as well as SEL opportunities aside from the PTO.
- For more ways to include stakeholder needs and expectations in supporting a safe, brave, compassionate, and nurturing school culture consider using the MA DESE [Safe and Supportive Schools Framework](#) to deepen the intentional focus on school climate and culture.
- Continue Learning Walks and Rounds at all schools currently doing them and begin a process to start them at all schools.

Purpose

The Equity Process conducted a thorough analysis of MCAS datasets to identify strengths, challenges and opportunities for improvement as requested by the District.

Summary

The CBRSD MCAS data results show that many more students had gaps in their knowledge of math, and to a lesser extent, English/language arts when compared to students across the state in the same grades who meet or exceed grade level expectations.

- Overall, 45% of students in grades K-8 scored meeting expectations or higher in ELA, 37% in science and 29% in math. Both science and math scores represent slightly lower than the state average at 42% and 33% in science and math, respectively.
- For 10th grade ELA, 59% of students scored meeting expectations or higher compared to 64% of students across the state. In 10th grade math, 47% of students scored meeting expectations or higher compared to 52% of students across the state.
- For high-needs students in grades 3-5 meeting expectations or higher in all MCAS content areas (except in grade 3 Math), CBRSD students scored an average of 10% higher than the state average. 31% of high-needs students in grades K-8 scored meeting expectations or higher in ELA compared to the state average at 28%, with 27% in science and 16% in Math.
- For students with special education services in grades 3-5 meeting expectations or higher, data indicates an overall weakness in both mathematics and ELA especially in Grades 4 and 5. 12% of students with special education services in grades K-8 scored meeting expectations or higher in ELA compared to the state average at 16%, with 8% in science and only 6% in math.

The tables and information that follow present a high-level overview of what was learned through the data examination. The full data analysis report and recommendations are included in [Appendix A](#).

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF DISTRICT DATA

INFORMATION	DATA
Total Enrollment	1, 515
% Special Education Students	15.2%
% English Language Learners	.5%
Economically Disadvantaged / Low Income	37% / 44.7%
Student Absences 10+	24.3% (2021)
In-School Suspension	1.3% (2020)
Out-of-School Suspension	2.1% (2020)
Dropouts	.4% (2021)
Graduated in 4 years	93.4% (2020)
Graduated in 5 years	97.9% (2019)
Per Pupil Expenditures	\$16,065
Overall Expenditures	\$28. 94 M
Teacher Retention Rate	92.4% (2022)

Recommendations

TEP's review of CBRSD data identifies the need for improvement in the following areas:

- Student Absences 10+: Although, this year, the District has shown a 3% lower rate than the last three years, the District's effort to encourage student attendance should be maintained. TEP recommends a tiered approach to attendance issues. The District should explore a consult with [Attendance Works](#) or similar agencies to support this effort.
- In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions: The data indicates a higher percentage rate than the current state rates at 1.2% for in-school suspension and 2.0% for out-of-school suspension. While there has been a significant decrease in the number of suspensions made since 2016, the District's effort to decrease student suspension rates should be maintained. TEP recommends the following approaches to achieve a reduction of school suspension rates:
 - Establish an integrated, District-wide system of [Restorative Justice](#) programs
 - Establish a couple of Districtwide [PBIS](#) values for all schools allowing school to include a few of their own school-based values (Currently each school has PBIS)
 - Provide relevant training on [implicit bias](#) and asset-based youth development for teachers
 - Consider a progressive discipline approach to disciplinary infractions

- Low-Income Students: CBRSD data indicates that the District has a higher number of low-income students in comparison to the state’s 43.8% rate. TEP recommends that the District review current systems and practices to address differentiated needs to provide wraparound support for low-income students. The Learning Policy Institute states *“These include both wraparound supports for nutrition, health care, social services, and extended learning—which may be provided through community, schools—and the high-quality staff, curricular materials, and professional learning opportunities for teachers that generally matter for student outcomes and can help counteract the effects of a school’s poverty level.”*^v
 - During our time TEP heard several labels (names given to certain groups of students) mentioned concerning students who are identified as low-income. TEP recommends removing all student labels that may cause students to feel alienated, different, and or like less than. Statistically, labels create barriers, upholds cultural implicit biases and can allow a student’s inner critic (negative voice of self-doubt) to limit their ability to learn to their potential and beyond.

Purpose

For CBRSD to successfully implement its vision of social, emotional, and academic needs of its students, the District will first need to create, engage, and develop its own Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) handbook identifying procedures and interventions available to students. As a point of reference, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has created an in-depth [MTSS Blueprint](#) for the state along with a compendium of resources and professional development opportunities available for Districts and schools throughout the Commonwealth.

Summary

Approximately 15.6% of the CBRSD student population have special learning needs. Current data on special education in CBRSD indicates the following:

- Drop Out Rate of 4.7%: The percentage of students on IEP are higher than the state rate of 2.7%.
- Graduation Rate of 69.2%: Students on IEP are much lower than the general education graduation rate of CBRSD at 96.3% as well as the state graduation rate for students on IEPs at 74.7%. This is an alarmingly large gap between general education students versus students on IEP at CBRSD.
- Special Education Programs Rate: The data reveals that CBRSD's special education programs are highly inclusive with 81.8% in the full inclusion program, while only 2% of its students with special needs are in a substantially separate program. 11.3% of its students with special needs are in the partial inclusion program.
- Parent Involvement: 100%.
- Disproportionality in Special Education and in Disability Categories: none observed.
- Initial Evaluation Timeline: 100% on time during the school year 2013-2014.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) supports implementation of a MTSS because it supports the accelerated learning of students including those who are on an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Section 8002 of the ESEA includes a definition of "multi-tier system of supports" (MTSS): *"A comprehensive continuum of evidence-based, systemic practices to support a rapid response to students' needs with regular observation to facilitate data-based instructional decision making."*^{vi} When the MTSS framework is implemented appropriately, students with disabilities' needs are addressed in an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Recommendations

- For CBRSD to provide an inclusive educational environment for all learners to attain social, emotional, and academic success, all members of the CBRSD leadership team must develop a shared understanding of their vision. This is essential in the foundation of the organization because it provides clear direction and focus for educational growth and learning for all students. Having a shared vision that is understood clearly and is articulated with purpose by every member of the CBRSD leadership team, fosters commitment to students, families, and stakeholders. It can also help school leaders identify less productive initiatives and projects that may not serve the larger vision of the CBRSD.
- TEP recommends further articulation and visioning processes be put in place in the next year or during a summer leadership retreat. Once all members of the CBRSD leadership team understand the true meaning and purpose of the District's vision, then the path for a more equitable and inclusive environment can emerge more naturally and efficiently.
- While CBRSD's vision is to be an inclusive educational environment, TEP can help to delve deeper with the leadership team to ask questions for further clarification on what each of these words brings to the District and what the impact is that the community expects.

Appendix B provides a full summary of recommended MTSS Tiered Interventions.

OWNER OF LEARNING LADDER

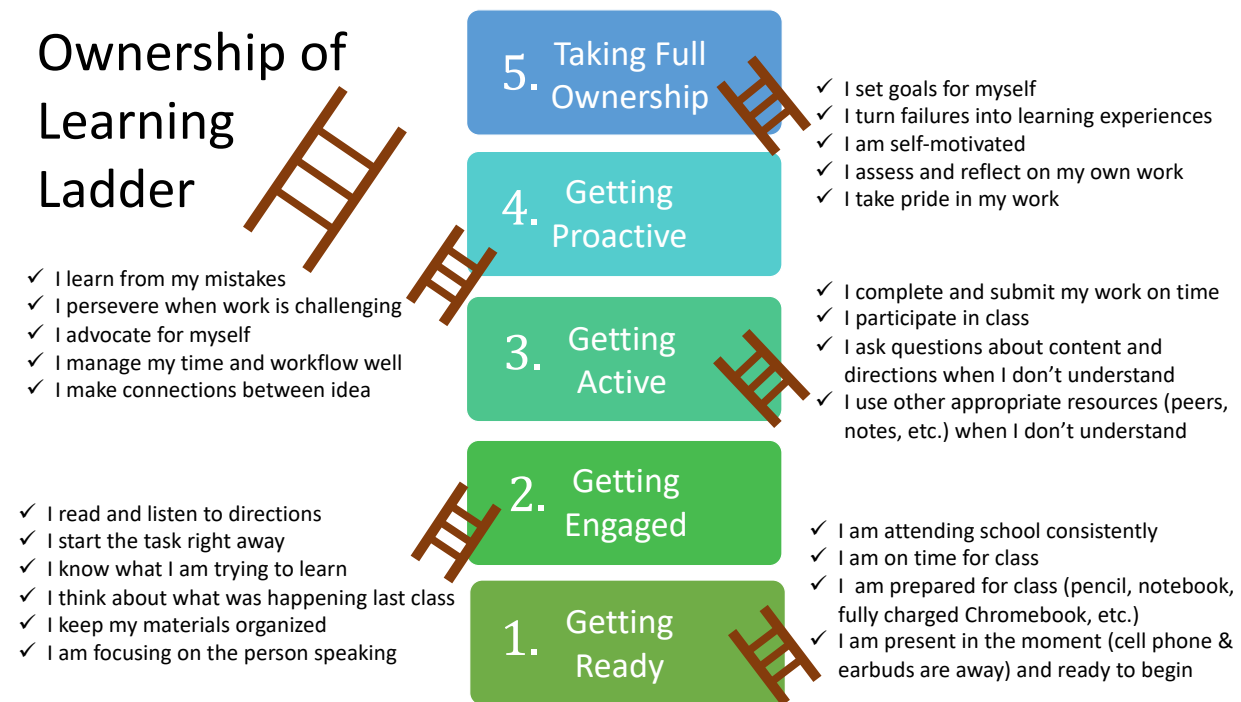
Purpose

CBRSD created guidelines to support students to develop good habits for learning with specific steps that can help them become successful learners.

Summary

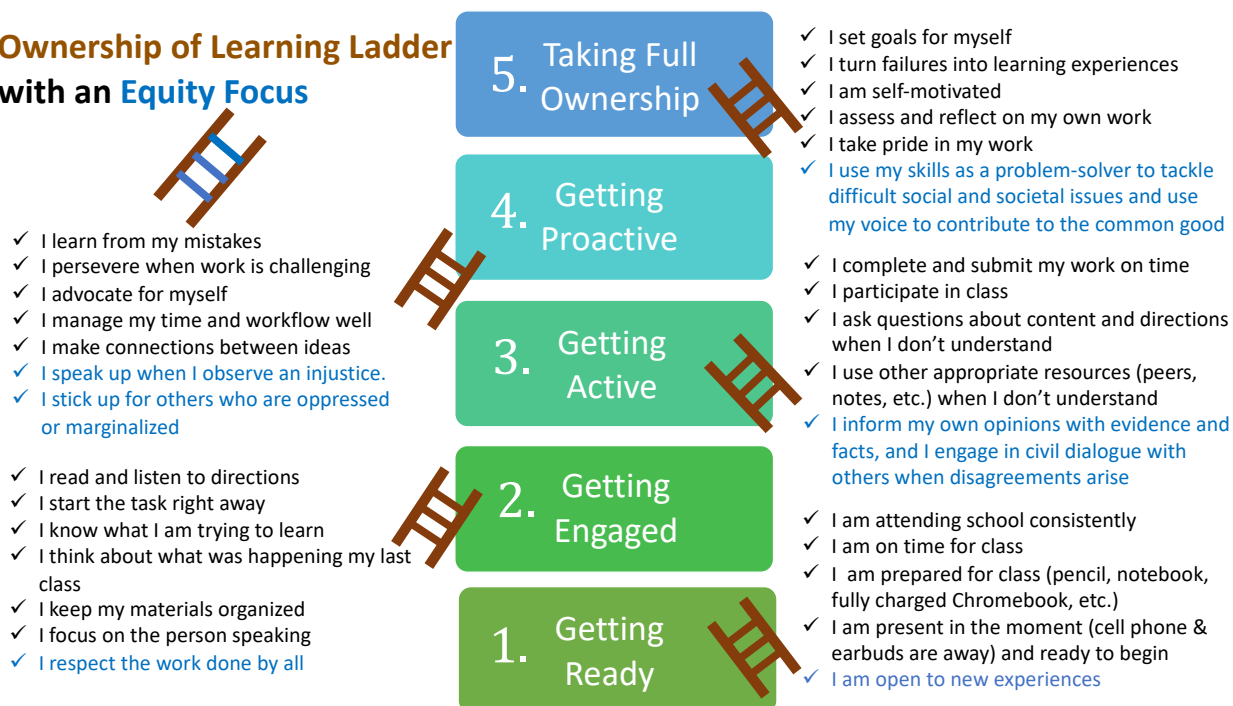
The Equity Process has examined the Ownership of Learning Ladder exercise and considered ways to help move it from a skill development exercise to an opportunity for student voice and equity. The

CBRSD EXISTING OWNERSHIP OF LEARNING LADDER:



PROPOSED CBRSD OWNERSHIP OF LEARNING LADDER WITH AN EQUITY FOCUS:

Ownership of Learning Ladder with an Equity Focus



Recommendations

- Wahconah Regional High School should continue to use best practices outlined in the **Ownership of Learning Ladder** while applying an equity focus to allow for greater student choice and voice.
- The leaders of Wahconah Regional High School should share the ladder and purpose behind the ladder with the other schools in the District as A Portrait of a Graduate is further designed in the coming school year. While A Portrait of a Graduate will effectively support the expectations of every CBRSD graduate, its primary focus will be on students in grades nine through twelve. The **Ownership of Learning Ladder** can provide a guided support for lower grades. It can also ensure that students are prepared for high school and beyond.

Purpose

A Portrait of a Graduate resource provides strategic direction for the redesign of the overall educational experience for students. This collective vision reinvigorates and re-engages students, educators, and community stakeholders.

Summary

Educators can use the examples provided below to design a more robust and systematic means to support secondary school students to imagine their future. The following are sources that CBRSD could draw from to create their own Portrait of a Graduate:

- [A Comprehensive Guide](#) from Panorama Education
- [A Portrait of a Graduate](#) from Battelle for Kids
- [The BARR Foundation](#) webinar and website
- [Harvard Dash](#) capstone project by Todd Stewart
- [Example of a System in Action](#) in Fairfax County Public Schools
- [Springfield, MA Public Schools Video](#) students describe their experiences

Recommendations

- The District has done some core work of focusing on performance data (e.g., MCAS scores) from previous years to provide instructional support “in the now”. TEP recommends that CBRSD incorporates that information as leaders. Then continue to build their understanding while naming the importance of shifting to a future-focused method that prepares, centers and supports all students in the actualization of their dreams, goals in life and future.
- Strategically and intentionally prioritize A Portrait of a Graduate. The focus will require a paradigm shift for some community members. To be completely successful, professional development and support is recommended for everyone (all) to build a District-wide approach of expectations and exciting possibilities that offers staff, students, and the greater community time to co-create what success looks and feels like to **ALL** CBRSD graduates.

Purpose

The Equity Process reviewed publicly available data on student discipline. TEP also reviewed school policies and student handbooks to understand the correlation between disciplinary policies and their impact on students' daily participation at their schools. During the review process we also took students' survey responses into consideration.

Summary

A review of publicly reported data from the DESE dashboard revealed very small numbers of students with long-term suspensions and none that identified who were referred for off-site services. There were fewer than ten students involved in long-term suspension (more than 2 days) and none more than 10 days in 2019-20 or 2020-21.

Other observations from the data:

- Declining Enrollment: Since DESE began displaying data, the District enrollment has declined from a high of 1,845 students in 2012-13 to 1,567 in 2021. The percentage of students reported as receiving disciplinary referrals (either in-school or out-of-school suspension) is relatively low but seems to be concentrated mostly in the "high needs" category.
- The dropout rate is low, consisting of mostly males, dropping out in 10th or 11th grade. This has improved since they began reporting dropout data in 2006.
- The District is 90+% White, with a small but slowly increasing Hispanic population (about 1% in the past 4 years).

TEP's examination of discipline policies in student handbooks reveals that there appears to be more of a focus on restorative practices in some of the elementary schools, but not all. There is a nod to progressive discipline in the middle school code of conduct (see below), but the high school handbook contains many rules with little reference to anything other than punitive discipline (e.g., detention, suspension, and expulsion).

Recommendations

- Consider creating a District-wide "Code of Conduct and Student Support" handbook that is asset based and consistent across the District. In reading the handbooks from the various schools, it is clear that they are inconsistent and unaligned. Advocating for a District-wide Code of Conduct will allow for aligned support based on restorative practices rather than the punitive "command and control" model that currently exists.

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RECOMMENDATIONS – THE NORTH STAR

The Equity Process has assembled recommendations based on the results of the Equity Audit. The audit was conducted through a detailed process to gather information and evidence including focus groups, 1:1 interviews, surveys, current policy review, processes, and procedures, including a visit to District schools and ongoing meetings with District leaders. TEP reviewed publicly available data on student demographics, staffing, MCAS/Accountability, discipline and held facilitated discussions with stakeholders to understand how equitable and inequitable practices present themselves and affect students. During research, observations, meetings, interviews, and conversations, stakeholders were actively engaged in discussions around the changes that needed to occur within the CBRSD. As a result, we noticed opportunities to sustain best practices.

The recommendations aforementioned and the ones that follow are based on our findings. The following are broad-spectrum recommendations that are a summation of our final comment to the District. They will allow CBRSD to focus their efforts succinctly on climate, culture, and vision so everyone feels a sense of value and belonging within their school communities. They will also ensure that stakeholders have a voice as members of their CBRSD community by reducing implicit biases of the marginalized populations who CBRSD serves.

CLIMATE, CULTURE AND VISION

- Co-create a set of values that include feedback from your stakeholders. Some questions and statements to consider are:
 - What are some competencies that matter to the CBRSD community **TODAY** as your student populations and expectations for global learning have changed over the past decade?
 - What would they look like in action?
 - Identify your stakeholders through an inclusive lens. Ensure that all voices matter and can be heard.
 - How might they feel to all stakeholders?
 - How might you feel as leaders and staff?
- As a result of the pandemic, teaching and learning has shifted tremendously. Teachers need to be seen, heard, and nurtured too. Include a scientifically proven form of SEL/wellness program for staff. TEP recommends that you connect with UMASS Medical School for support in Mindfulness.
- Annually ensure that the leadership team and School Committee goals and vision have a transparent process for communication (internally and externally), include all voices of

the two bodies equally and an alignment to **SMARTIE** expectations – [See MA DESE's website for more guidance](#).

- Continue to implement your best SEL strategies and practices that support your stakeholders.
- Provide more opportunities for family and community engagement within the schools by creating a system of policy, procedures and practices that respectfully honor all parties. Pay particular attention to families who you have struggled to connect to. Pay particular attention to families who live in the Hill Towns. Find out from our families who live in there, if they want to be called Hill Town Families? Is it appropriate or is CBRSD families more inclusive? Pay particular attention to families who are socially and economically marginalized and disadvantaged. Ensure that all voices are represented during discussions and planning including those of your families with greater resources. Strengthen this commitment by extending the formation of [A Portrait of a Graduate](#) from being a high school initiative to a whole District initiative.
- Establish local community partnerships to cultivate additional opportunities, resources and support for students, staff, parents/guardians, and families. Ensure that the partnerships are aligned to District and school policies, handbooks, and committees, including the CBRSD School Committee. This is another opportunity to draw on the strengths of A Portrait of a Graduate through a whole District approach.
- Establish a relationship with UMASS Medical School's Mindfulness Program to offer additional support to the mental health needs of students and families. This relationship will also support the global aspect of your curriculum, especially at the high school level.
- For the 2022/2023 school year you've added several positions that will support the implementation of a strong MTSS model. Utilize the strengths and knowledge of your current SPED Director, newly hired BCBA, newly hired School Adjustment Counselor and all relevant staff to strategically amplify the supports and strategies needed to identify student needs and activate student success for all.

Purpose

The Equity Process conducted a deep dive into publicly available data on MCAS scores within CBRSD to identify trends, areas of concern, and demonstrated best practices across the District.

Summary

The Central Berkshire Regional School District MCAS data results show that many more students had gaps in their knowledge of math and, to a lesser extent, English/language arts, compared to students across the state in the same grades who meet or exceeded grade level Expectations.

- Overall, 45% of students in Grades K-8 scored meeting expectations or higher in ELA, 37% in science and 29% did so in math. Both science and math scores represent slightly lower than the state average at 42% and 33% in science and math, respectively.
- For 10th grade ELA, 59% of students scored meeting expectations or higher compared to 64% of students across the state. In 10th grade math, 47% of students scored meeting expectations or higher compared to 52% of students across the state.
- For high needs students in grades 3-5 meeting expectations or higher, in all MCAS content areas (except in Grade 3 math), CBRSD students scored an average of 10% higher than the state average. 31% of high needs students in Grades K-8 scored Meeting Expectations or higher in ELA compared to the state average at 28%, with 27% in science and 16% in Math.
- For students with special education services in grades 3-5 meeting expectations or higher, data indicates an overall weakness in both mathematics and ELA especially in Grades 4 and 5. 12 % of students with special education in Grades K-8 scored meeting expectations or higher in ELA compared to the state average at 16%, with 8% in science and only 6% in math.

This appendix provides a full analysis of all data broken by District, school, and grade level on MCAS indicators. At the end of each section, we provide analysis and recommendations for improvement or further study.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE DISTRICT DATA

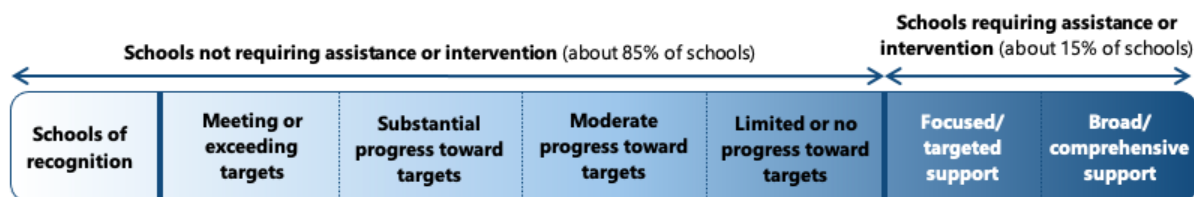
INFORMATION	DATA
Total Enrollment	1, 515
% SPED	15.2%
% ELL	.5%
Eco. Dis / Low Income	37% / 44.7%
Student Absences 10+	24.3% (2021)
In-School Suspension	1.3% (2020)
Out of School Suspension	2.1% (2020)
Dropouts	.4% (2021)
Graduated 4 years	93.4% (2020)
Graduated 5 years	97.9% (2019)
Per Pupil Expenditures	\$16,065
Expenditures	\$28. 94 M
Teacher Retention Rate	92.4% (2022)

MCAS PERFORMANCE MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS BY RACE 2021

School	Asian	Hispanic	Multi Race	White
Grade 3 Reading	N/A	N/A	N/A	49%
Grade 3 Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	28%
Grade 4 ELA	N/A	N/A	N/A	48%
Grade 4 Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	36%
Grade 5 ELA	N/A	N/A	N/A	35%
Grade 5 Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	29%
Grade 5 STE	N/A	N/A	N/A	43%
Grade 6 ELA	N/A	N/A	36%	53%
Grade 6 Math	N/A	N/A	0%	30%
Grade 7 ELA	N/A	N/A	N/A	48%
Grade 7 Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	26%
Grade 8 ELA	N/A	N/A	N/A	33%
Grade 8 Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	27%
Grade 8 STE	N/A	N/A	N/A	33%
Grade 10 ELA	N/A	N/A	N/A	61%
Grade 10 Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	47%
ELA K-8	0%	53%	44%	45%
Math K-8	0%	25%	20%	29%
Science (5 and 8)	0%	30%	0%	38%

Analysis and Recommendations: TEP recommends that the team who is responsible for reporting racial data and the performance of these subgroups carefully report the racial makeup of students into the SIMS reporting data to accurately measure the performance of students of color enrolled at CBRSD.

MCAS 2021 ACCOUNTABILITY RESULTS



School	Progress Toward Target
Becket Washington Elementary	54% Substantial Progress toward targets
Kittredge Elementary	82% Meeting or exceeding targets
Craneville Elementary	72% Substantial Progress toward targets
Nessacus Regional Middle School	50% Substantial progress toward targets
Wahconah Regional High School	36% - Moderate progress toward targets

Analysis and Recommendations: TEP recommends that the District leadership team along with the administration team of the Wahconah Regional High School conduct a deeper dive into the school's data, especially pertaining to their progress toward targets, which include the examination of the followings school factors:

- Achievement
- Student progress or growth
- High school completion
- Progress towards English proficiency for English learners
- Chronic absenteeism
- Advanced coursework completion

After a deeper dive is conducted, it is recommended that WRHS complete an action plan to meet targets into the next school year with emphasis on equitable practices and supporting students' attendance to school.

MCAS 2021 ACCOUNTABILITY RESULTS: PERCENTILES

School	Percentile
Becket Washington Elementary	71%
Kittredge Elementary	42%
Craneville Elementary	48%
Nessacus Regional Middle School	17%
Wahconah Regional High School	47%

MCAS 2021 MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Grades 3, 4, & 5 CBRSD vs State

Grades 3, 4 & 5	CBRSD	State
Grade 3 Reading	48%	51%
Grade 3 Math	27%	33%
Grade 4 ELA	51%	49%
Grade 4 Math	36%	33%
Grade 5 ELA	38%	47%
Grade 5 Math	31%	33%
Grade 5 STE	44%	42%

Grade 3: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD	Summary
Reading	48%	<i>Both content areas require improvement in comparison to state rate.</i>
Math	27%	

Grade 4: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD	Summary
ELA	51%	<i>Kudos to the 4th grade TEAM! CBRSD leadership must be proud of the work that the 4th graders have done! In addition, the District must review and learn from the practices of the 4th grade team in teaching all students in ELA and Math. This is the strongest team in both content areas across the District!</i>
Math	36%	

Grade 5: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD	Summary
ELA	38%	<i>All content areas require improvement in comparison to state rate.</i>
Math	31%	
Science	44%	

Analysis and Recommendations for Grades 3, 4 & 5: TEP recommends that grades 3 and 5 instructional practices in both ELA and math should be examined deeper including teachers'

competencies, item-analysis and student support for areas/skills that are not skillfully mastered.

Grades 6, 7 & 8 CBRSD vs State

Grades 6, 7, & 8	CBRSD	State
Grade 6 ELA	51%	47%
Grade 6 Math	29%	33%
Grade 7 ELA	48%	43%
Grade 7 Math	25%	35%
Grade 8 ELA	33%	41%
Grade 8 Math	26%	32%
Grade 8 STE	32%	41%

Grade 6: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD	Summary
ELA	51%	<i>Math requires improvement for Grade 6 while ELA is a strong area for this grade level.</i>
Math	29%	

Grade 7: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD	Summary
ELA	48%	<i>Math requires improvement for Grade 7 while ELA is a strong area for this grade level.</i>
Math	25%	

Grade 8: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD	Summary
ELA	33%	<i>All content areas require improvement in comparison to state rate.</i>
Math	26%	
Science	32%	

Analysis and Recommendations for Grades 6, 7, & 8: TEP recommends that Grade 8 instructional practices in both ELA and Math should be examined deeper including teachers' competencies, item-analysis and student supports for areas/skills that are not skillfully mastered.

All Grades K-8 CBRSD vs State

All Grades K-8	CBRSD	State
ELA	45%	46%
Math	29%	33%
Science (5 and 8)	37%	42%

Analysis and Recommendations: Data above indicates an overall weakness in the area of Mathematics for Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10. TEP recommends equitable [practice in the instruction of mathematics](#) including the examination of the District's current math instructional practices, curriculum, grade level standards and the incumbent leaders/coaches philosophy on the instruction of math for CBRSD students.

Grade 10 Performance Summary

Grade 10	CBRSD	State
Grade 10 ELA	59%	64%
Grade 10 Math	47%	52%
Grade 10 Science*	No data	No data

*Grade 10 results for spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about CD requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>

MCAS 2021 RESULTS: HIGH NEEDS MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Grades 3, 4, & 5 CBRSD vs State

Grades 3, 4 & 5	CBRSD	State
Grade 3 Reading	34%	33%
Grade 3 Math	16%	18%
Grade 4 ELA	35%	31%
Grade 4 Math	21%	16%
Grade 5 ELA	31%	28%
Grade 5 Math	17%	16%
Grade 5 STE	37%	24%

Analysis and Recommendations: TEP observed a significant improvement of high-needs students in all MCAS elementary grade levels and content areas in comparison to the District's overall elementary MCAS performance. It is important to note that support and interventions, including possible tiered instruction, for high-needs students enrolled at CBRSD is working effectively.

All Grades K-8 CBRSD vs State

All Grades K-8	CBRSD	State
ELA	31%	28%
Math	16%	16%
Science (5 and 8)	27%	22%

Analysis and Recommendations: TEP observed a significant improvement of high-needs students in all MCAS elementary and middle grade levels and content areas in comparison to the District's overall elementary MCAS performance. It is important to note that support and interventions, including possible tiered instruction, for high-needs students enrolled at CBRSD is working effectively.

Grades 6, 7, & 8 CBRSD vs State

Grades 6, 7, & 8	CBRSD	State
Grade 6 ELA	32%	28%
Grade 6 Math	20%	16%
Grade 7 ELA	30%	24%
Grade 7 Math	10%	17%
Grade 8 ELA	22%	22%
Grade 8 Math	9%	15%
Grade 8 STE	19%	20%

Analysis and Recommendations: TEP observed a significant improvement of high-needs students in most MCAS middle school grade levels and content areas in comparison to the District's overall middle school MCAS performance. It is important to note that Grades 7 and 8 math MCAS performance for high-need students require improvement and analysis for further student support. TEP recommends equitable [practice in the instruction of mathematics](#) including the examination of the District's current math instructional practices, curriculum, grade level standards and the incumbent leaders/coach's philosophy on the instruction of math for CBRSD students.

Grade 10 vs State

Grades 10	CBRSD	State
Grade 10 ELA	43%	40%
Grade 10 Math	19%	27%
Grade 10 Science	No Data	No Data

Analysis and Recommendations: TEP observed a significant improvement of high-needs students in Grade 10 MCAS ELA and math in comparison to the District's overall Grade 10 MCAS ELA and math performance. It is important to note that supports and interventions including possible tiered instruction for high needs students enrolled at CBRSD is working effectively.

High Needs Grade 3: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD Data	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
Reading	34%	<i>This is an area of strength.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	16%		

High Needs Grade 4: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD Data	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	35%	<i>This is an area of strength.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	21%		

High Needs Grade 5: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD Data	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	31%	<i>This is an area of strength.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	17%		
Science	37%		

High Needs Grade 6: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD Data	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	32%	<i>This is an area of strength.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	20%		

High Needs Grade 7: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD Data	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	30%	<i>This is an area of strength.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	10%	<i>This is an area of limitation.</i>	

High Needs Grade 8: Performance Summary

Subject	CBRSD Data	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	22%	<i>This is an area of strength.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	9%	<i>This is an area of limitation.</i>	
Science	19%	<i>This is an area of strength.</i>	

MCAS 2021 RESULTS: SPECIAL EDUCATION MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Grades 3, 4, & 5 CBRSD vs State

Grades 3, 4 & 5	CBRSD	State
Grade 3 Reading	14%	22%
Grade 3 Math	13%	12%
Grade 4 ELA	8%	19%
Grade 4 Math	8%	11%
Grade 5 ELA	12%	16%
Grade 5 Math	6%	10%
Grade 5 STE	19%	17%

Analysis and Recommendations: Data above for students with disabilities indicates an overall weakness in both mathematics and ELA for Grades 4 and 5. TEP recommends [Universal Design for Learning](#) be incorporated throughout the instruction of students with disabilities including the examination of the District's current [co-teaching](#) and [inclusion practices](#).

All Grades K-8 CBRSD vs State

All Grades K-8	CBRSD	State
ELA	12%	16%
Math	6%	10%
Science (5 and 8)	8%	16%

Analysis and Recommendations: Data above for students with disabilities indicates an overall weakness in both mathematics and ELA for Grades K-8. TEP recommends [Universal Design for Learning](#) be incorporated throughout the instruction of students with disabilities including the examination of the District's current [co-teaching](#) and [inclusion practices](#).

Grades 6, 7, & 8 CBRSD vs State

Grades 6, 7, & 8	CBRSD	State
Grade 6 ELA	14%	15%
Grade 6 Math	5%	9%
Grade 7 ELA	17%	12%
Grade 7 Math	0%	8%
Grade 8 ELA	4%	11%
Grade 8 Math	4%	6%
Grade 8 STE	0%	13%

Analysis and Recommendations: Data above for students with disabilities indicates an overall weakness in both mathematics and ELA for Grades 6, 7 and 8. TEP recommends [Universal Design for Learning](#) be incorporated throughout the instruction of students with disabilities including the examination of the District's current [co-teaching](#) and [inclusion practices](#).

Grade 10 CBRSD vs State

Grade 10	CBRSD	State
Grade 10 ELA	17%	26%
Grade 10 Math	0%	14%
Grade 10 Science	No Data	No Data

Analysis and Recommendations: Data above for students with disabilities indicates an overall weakness in both mathematics and ELA for Grade 10. It is also important to note that **none** of the students with disabilities in Grade 10 math reached meet/exceed expectations. This area requires concentrated improvement for students with disabilities at CBRSD. TEP recommends [Universal Design for Learning](#) be incorporated throughout the instruction of students with disabilities including the examination of the District's current [co-teaching](#) and [inclusion practices](#).

Students with Disabilities Grade 3: Performance Summary

Subject	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
Reading	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	<i>This is an area of some strength.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>

Students with Disabilities Grade 4: Performance Summary

Subject	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	

Students with Disabilities Grade 5: Performance Summary

Subject	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	
Science	<i>This is an area of some strength.</i>	

Students with Disabilities Grade 6: Performance Summary

Subject	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	

Students with Disabilities Grade 7: Performance Summary

Subject	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	<i>This is an area of some strength.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	<i>This is an area of concern.</i>	

Students with Disabilities Grade 8: Performance Summary

Subject	Strength	Opportunity for Growth
ELA	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	<i>To be identified by the CBRSD team.</i>
Math	<i>This is an area for growth.</i>	
Science	<i>This is an area of concern.</i>	

MCAS ALT - CBRSD

School	2020-2021
No Data Available	

Analysis and Recommendations: TEP would like to gather raw data for the last three years as reported by schools across the District that participate in the MCAS ALT portfolio to further analyze students' performance placed in the substantially separate programs.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (ELEMENTARY) BASED ON SGP MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Elementary School	ELA 3-8	Math 3-8	Notes
Becket Washington Elementary	51%	38%	TEP recommends equitable <u>practice in the instruction of mathematics</u> including the examination of the District's current math instructional practices, curriculum, grade level standards and the incumbent leaders/coach's philosophy on the instruction of math for CBRSD students.
Kittredge Elementary	48%	32%	
Craneville Elementary	45%	31%	

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (MIDDLE SCHOOL) BASED ON SGP MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Middle School	ELA	Math	Notes
Nessacus Regional Middle School	44%	27%	The Equity Process is recommending equitable <u>practice in the instruction of Mathematics</u> including the examination of the District's current math instructional practices, curriculum, grade level standards and the incumbent leaders/coach's philosophy on the instruction of math for

			CBRSD students.
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STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (HIGH SCHOOL) BASED ON SGP MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

High School	ELA grade 10	Math grade 10	Notes
Wahconah Regional High School	61%	47%	TEP recommends equitable <u>practice in the instruction of mathematics</u> including the examination of the District's current math instructional practices, curriculum, grade level standards and the incumbent leaders/coach's philosophy on the instruction of math for CBRSD students.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (SPECIAL EDUCATION)

Special Education	ELA	Math	Science
Special Education	TEP recommends <u>Universal Design for Learning</u> be incorporated throughout the instruction of students with disabilities including the examination of the District's current co-teaching and inclusion practices.		

APPENDIX B: MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Purpose

For CBRSD to successfully implement their vision on the social, emotional, and academic needs of the students, the District will first need to create, engage, and develop their own Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) handbook that identifies procedures and interventions available for their students. As a point of reference, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has created an in-depth [MTSS Blueprint](#) for the state along with a compendium of resources and professional development opportunities available for Districts and schools throughout the Commonwealth.

Summary

Approximately 15.6% of the CBRSD student population have special learning needs. Current data on special education in CBRSD indicates the following:

- Drop Out Rate of 4.7%: the percentage of students on IEP are higher than the state rate of 2.7%
- Graduation Rate of 69.2%: students on IEP are much lower than the general education graduation rate of CBRSD at 96.3% as well as the state graduation rate for students on IEPs at 74.7%. This is an alarmingly large gap between general education students versus students on IEP at CBRSD.
- Special Education Programs Rate: the data reveals that CBRSD' special education programs are highly inclusive in nature with 81.8% of its students with special needs are in the full inclusion program, while only 2% of its students with special needs are in a substantially separate program. 11.3% of its students with special needs are in the partial inclusion program.
- 100% Parent Involvement
- Disproportionality in Special Education and in Disability Categories: none observed.
- Initial Evaluation Timeline: 100% on time during the school year 2013-2014.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) supports implementation of MTSS because it supports the accelerated learning of students including those who are on an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Section 8002 of the ESEA includes a definition of “multi-tier system of supports” (MTSS): *“A comprehensive continuum of evidence-based, systemic practices to support a rapid response to students’ needs with regular observation to facilitate data-based instructional decision making.”^{vii}* When the MTSS framework is implemented appropriately, students with disabilities’ needs are addressed in an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Academic Tiered Supports for Students with Disabilities

Tier 1 Core Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the high priority learning targets • Differentiate how students express what they learn • Integrate concepts and vocabulary with Augmentative Communication system
Tier 2 Supplemental Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-teach to build prior knowledge • Reteach to reinforce priority learning
Tier 3 Intensive Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on skill gaps related to priority learning targets and additional academic IEP goals (e.g., reading skills)

Behavioral and Social Emotional Tiered Supports for Students with Disabilities

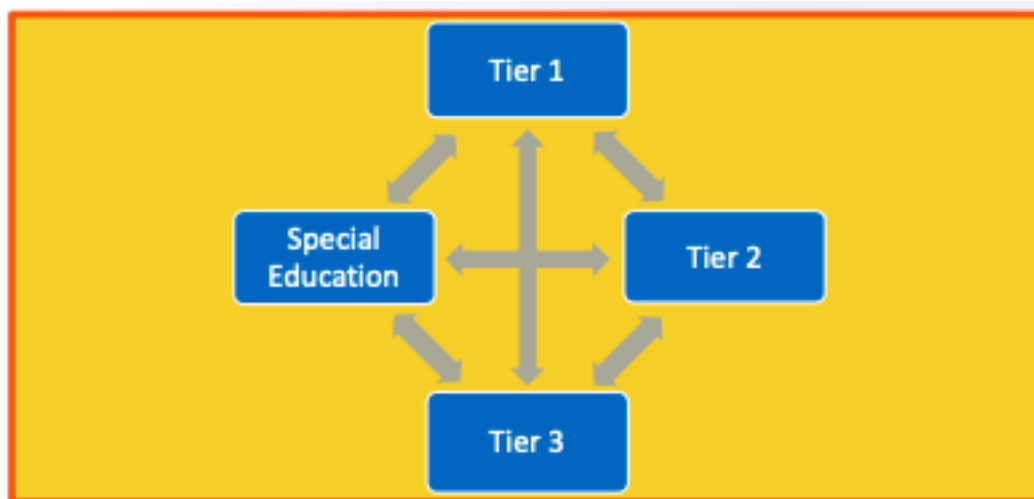
Tier 1 School-wide Positive Behavior and Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simpler language of same content used, visuals added, steps chunked into smaller step • Self-regulation skill building taught • Concepts and vocabulary for the school-wide system integrated with Augmentative Communication system
Tier 2 Targeted Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-teach • Re-teach • Provide sensory breaks and tools
Tier 3 Individualized Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional behavioral assessment completed • Wrap-around supports added • Behavior Intervention Plan developed as part of IEP

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has a comprehensive [MTSS Blueprint](#) available to every District in the Commonwealth. Educators and families can also access this [MTSS guide for supporting students with disabilities at school and home](#) as prepared by the Center on PBIS for more ideas on tiered supports for students with disabilities.

MTSS best practices for students with disabilities include the following:

- Universal Screening
- Using evidence-based practices
- Progress monitoring
- Using data-based decision making
- Fidelity of implementation
- Supplementing Tier 1 universal interventions with Tiers 2 and 3 as needed

In essence, MTSS support for students with disabilities continues to evolve as part of the ongoing progress monitoring for students with disabilities. MTSS supports for students with disabilities will essentially look like this:



Graphic Reference: Texas Education Agency

The following are specific tiered supports for students with disabilities which are equally supportive of all students at CBRSD:

Tier 1 Supports

Support is provided to **all** students in the school, whether or not they have been identified as at risk of having developmental or mental health needs. Providing a wide array of hands-on Tier 1 support promotes student self-sufficiency, creates a supportive climate and culture of learning in the classroom, and prevents many behavioral challenges before they start. Tier 1 includes Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and Behavioral supports.

TIER 1 ACADEMIC SUPPORTS:

Universal academic supports to support all learners can include:

- Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time
- Homework catch-up periods
- Individual and visual schedules
- Math tutoring
- Mentoring
- Non-verbal cues and signals
- Organizational tools
- Ownership of Learning Ladder
- Peer tutoring
- Teacher office hours
- Classroom posters and teaching aids
- Enrichment programs

TIER 1 SEL SUPPORTS:

Consider providing universal screening for social emotional learning. Universal screeners for social emotional learning are typically brief and conducted with all students may be followed by additional testing to corroborate students' risk status, selection of evidence-based tools and assess students' competency areas, such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, goal-directed behavior, personal responsibility, decision-making, and optimistic thinking.

The following are samples of universal screeners for social emotional learning that CBRSD can consider:

- [Devereux Students Strengths Assessment \(DESSA\)](#) originally developed by the Devereux Center for Resilient Children. It is a standardized, strength-based behavior rating scale completed in 5 to 8 minutes and used to measure the social-emotional competence for children in grades K-8.
- [Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener](#) (SAEBRS) a brief tool supported by research for use in universal screening for behavioral and emotional risk for use in the K-12 setting.
- [Panorama Education](#) offers an SEL tool to help schools improve their social emotional learning

In addition, consider selecting a Social Emotional Learning curriculum for classroom use. The following are samples of SEL curriculum that CBRSD can consider:

- [Mindup](#) “An evidence-based program that has been shown to increase prosocial actions, decrease aggressive behaviors, and improve academic achievement especially in math and language arts.”
- [Morning Meeting](#) “An engaging way to start each day, build a strong sense of community, and set children up for success socially and academically. Each morning, students and teachers gather together in a circle for twenty to thirty minutes and interact with one another during four purposeful components.”
- [RULER](#) “A systemic approach to SEL developed at the Center for Emotional Intelligence. RULER aims to infuse the principles of emotional intelligence into the immune system of pre-K to twelve schools, informing how leaders lead, teachers teach, students learn, and families support students. RULER is an acronym for the five skills of emotional intelligence.”
- [Toolbox Project](#) “A simple and practical metaphor directing children to the experience and awareness of 12 innate Tools that already exist inside them.”
- [Wayfinder](#) “Founded at the Stanford School, Wayfinder was built upon leading research showing that students who experience belonging and purpose are better able to thrive in and out of school. A full K-12 program delivers all the tools you need to easily integrate lifelong skill sets in the classroom while positively impacting areas that matter.”

Educators can access additional resources on SEL:

- [Transforming Education](#) has an online professional development toolkit, [SEL for Educators](#). The toolkit can be used in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), staff meetings, professional development, training sessions, or for individual learning, reflection and practice.
- Cambridge, MA based [Engaging Schools](#) has a free white paper on [Embedding Social Emotional Learning in High Schools](#) that you can download from their website. They also provide professional development and a variety of resources on schoolwide discipline and engaging classroom practices.
- [ACT for Youth](#)
- [Massachusetts School Mental Health Consortium](#)
- [Rennie Center for SEL](#)

TIER 1 BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS:

Consider the climate and culture at each of the schools at CBRSD. TEP recommends examining the following factors that could indicate the need for targeted behavioral support for students such as: school-wide discipline, non-classroom management, classroom management and individual students engaging in chronic problem behaviors. One option for CBRSD to develop more robust and consistent use of Tier 1 supports for students is using a wholistic Districtwide

approach to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) by adopting a few principles first at the District level and the others can be adopted by the schools. [The Center on PBIS](#) has several resources to help schools, Districts and states related to the following areas for students' behavior supports:

- A [PBIS Self-Assessment Survey \(SAS\)](#) to determine a baseline for behavioral supports.
- Setting and articulating school-wide expectations about positive behaviors.
- Defining rules, positive support, and discipline procedures.
- Creating and disseminating a universal set of behavioral expectation documents
- Tracking office referrals and other data to identify trends and create responses.
- Academic interventions Note: research proves that many times adolescents exhibit Behavioral challenges because of an academic deficiency. Creating academic assessments and common interventions goes a long way in helping students to self-advocate when they are having difficulty and avoids many behavioral issues.

Tier 2 Supports

Includes the universal/baseline supports included in Tier 1 plus additional targeted supports and interventions for smaller groups of students who need additional support. Tier 2 supports are often referred to as “hands-joined” supports provided by the classroom teacher with assistance from academic and behavioral support staff. As with Tier 1, the goal is to help students gain skill to manage their issues and keep them in class if possible.

TIER 2 ACADEMIC SUPPORTS:

- [Response to Intervention \(RTI\) supports](#)
- Supplemental instruction
- Independent study options
- In-class time for homework and catch-up
- Literacy coaching
- [Identifying specific a reading disability](#)
- Math tutoring
- Peer mentoring
- 1 to 1 academic tutoring

TIER 2 SEL SUPPORTS:

- Social Skills Groups
- [Peace Room](#)
- Small groups/classes for specialized instruction that supports behavioral, social-emotional and/or academic success (e.g., student advisory programs in the middle and high school)
- Student mentoring programs
- Universal mental health screening
- Professional development for evidence-based services and supports ([Cognitive Behavior Therapy](#))
- School-based mental health teaming
- Partnering with community organizations to support families experiencing poverty, addiction, domestic violence, homelessness, and/or mental health challenges
- Identifying and removing barriers to family involvement

TIER 2 BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS:

[PBIS Tier 2](#) practices and systems provide targeted support for students requiring additional help. Other options include:

- Tier 2 Alternatives to Suspension
- Behavior Contract
- Classroom-based [Behavior Intervention Plan](#) (BIP)
- Breaks
- Restorative Circles
- Check In Check Out (CICO)
- Classroom management support
- Counselor referral
- Daily behavior form
- [Forced Choice Reinforcement Survey](#)
- [Functional Behavior Assessment](#) (FBA)
- Restorative justice practices
- Reward system

- Self-monitoring
- [Sensory Tools](#)
- [Social Stories](#)
- Direct Instruction on:
 - Conflict Resolution Skills
 - Coping Skills
 - Relationship Skills
 - Relaxation Techniques
 - Social Skills

Tier 3 Supports

Tier 3 supports are often referred to as “hand-off” protocols and support for behavior intervention specialists to use in partnership with classroom teachers to support students and manage disruptive behavior. The goal is to create checks and balances that provide a systematic way to manage the situation when a student must be removed from the classroom and provide a clear and predictable means for that student to return to class and be provided additional academic, SEL and behavioral support to experience success.

TIER 3 ACADEMIC SUPPORTS AND INTERVENTIONS

- 1-1 intensive instruction outside of the regular classroom
- Intensive subject-area tutoring
- Pull-out classes
- Before or after school classes
- Summer school
- [RTI Tier 3 interventions](#)

TIER 3 SEL SUPPORTS AND INTERVENTIONS

- School-based individual and group therapy
- Wraparound services (e.g., providing supports for students experiencing poverty, addiction, domestic violence, homelessness, and/or mental health challenges)

- Educators can also access this [resource](#) from the National Center for Intensive Intervention for a more intensive and targeted SEL Tier 3 support for students.

TIER 3 BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS AND INTERVENTIONS

- [PBIS Tier 3 supports and interventions](#)
- Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) Including Behavioral Intervention Team*
- Restorative justice conferencing
- Re-entry protocols
- Behavior contract tied to re-entry plans
- Behavior meetings that include a parent/adult advocate, teacher, and counselor/dean
- Collaboration with student's physician and/or mental health provider
- Counselor referral for mental and/or behavioral health services
- Revisiting the Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)

ENDNOTES

ⁱ Accessed online from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Berkshire_Regional_School_District

ⁱⁱ Accessed online from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/7417-free-and-reduced-price-lunch-enrollment-rates-by-school-district#detailed/10/7634-7636,7638-7658,7660-7664,7666-7677,7679-7701,7703-7748,7750,7752-7764,7766-7779,7781-7786,7788,7790-7826,7828-7832,7834-7835,7837-7838,7840-7841,7843-7858,7860-7861,7863-7871,7873-7881,7883-7886,7888-7911,7914-7916,7918-7928,7932,7934-7940,7942-7951,7953-7970,7972-8024,10015-10016,10033-10034,10036-10038,10040,10043,10047,10224/false/1484,1457,1228,1070,1022,892,784,685,684/any/14498>

ⁱⁱⁱ Accessed online from: <https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/massachusetts/districts/central-berkshire-110519>

^{iv} Ibid

^v Darling-Hammond, L., Schachner, A., & Edgerton, A. K. (with Badrinarayan, A., Cardichon, J., Cookson, P. W., Jr., Griffith, M., Klevan, S., Maier, A., Martinez, M., Melnick, H., Truong, N., Wojcikiewicz, S.). (2020). *Restarting and reinventing school: Learning in the time of COVID and beyond*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Accessed online from: <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/leveraging-resources-community-schools-technical-assistance-brief>

^{vi} Accessed online from: <https://www.everystudentsucceedsact.org/title-viii>

^{vii} Accessed online from: <https://www.everystudentsucceedsact.org/title-viii>

This page marks the end of the Equity Audit. This Equity Audit was conducted and written by The Equity Process, LLC upon the request of the Central Berkshire Regional School District in Massachusetts.

Enduring Statements

A senior leader of the district, "I want to be sure that we are preparing our students for the 21st Century and beyond."

A member of the Equity Task Force, "Students deserve to have teachers that look like them."

A member of the School Committee, "Are our practices aligned with what we say we are doing?"

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