

## Full Report



# A CMSi Curriculum Audit™ of the Stamford Public Schools

August 2022

Dr. Tamu Lucero  
Superintendent

Stamford Public Schools  
888 Washington Blvd, 5th Floor  
Stamford, CT 06901





**The Full Report** is the summative audit report and is comprised of two sections, the Executive Summary and the Expanded Report.

**The Executive Summary** serves as the Introduction to the Expanded Report, but also stands alone as a high-level synthesis of the strengths and weaknesses found in the school district and the actions needed to improve. These are presented in the Executive Summary in a more accessible format and are discussed in greater detail in the Expanded Report.

**The Expanded Report** details the data and analyses performed in drawing the conclusions presented in the Findings of the audit. The Expanded Report also provides background information regarding the methodology used, the rationale and research applied, and presents the detailed recommendations for improving system processes and, ultimately, student learning.

Sections of the Full Report are as follows:

**Executive Summary (Introduction)**

District Strengths  
Key Findings  
Recommendations

**Expanded Report**

Approach of the Audit  
Findings  
Recommendations  
Appendices





## Executive Summary



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## **This Audit Report is comprised of two sections:**

The **Executive Summary** provides an overview of the audit findings and recommendations in a short, graphic format.

The **Expanded Report** gives a more complete discussion of audit methodology and discusses the findings and recommendations at length. The Expanded Report also presents the extensive data analyzed and an explanation of what those data demonstrated in the context of the audit.

# Stamford Public Schools Curriculum Audit by the numbers

Site Visit Date:  
May 9-13, 2022

## 234

interviews conducted with  
staff, administrators, and  
board of education members



## 352

documents  
collected for review



## 317

classrooms observed



## 3,024

survey responses from building  
administrators parents, teachers,  
and students



## 1,606

student work  
artifacts evaluated

# Introduction: The CMSi Curriculum Audit



This document constitutes the Executive Summary of a Curriculum Audit of the Stamford Public Schools in Stamford, Connecticut. A Curriculum Audit is designed to reveal the extent to which leaders and personnel of a school district have developed and implemented a coordinated, valid, and comprehensive system to manage the design, development, implementation, evaluation, and support of curriculum. Curriculum is defined as the set of learnings students are expected to master over the course of their years in the district. The system to manage this curriculum, when implemented effectively and in alignment with the district's vision for student engagement, will yield improved student learning and achievement over time if all its related processes and components are operating in coordination with one another. The effectiveness of curriculum management results as well in increased efficiency and assures district taxpayers that all fiscal support is optimized within the conditions under which the district functions.

## District Background

The Stamford Public Schools serves approximately 16,600 students in the Stamford, Connecticut, region. Students are served through any of 21 school campuses, made up of 13 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, and 3 high schools. Specialized programming includes seven magnet programs and three International Baccalaureate programs. Stamford Public Schools serves a diverse student population of 48% Hispanic/Latino, 28% White, 14% Black/African American, 7% Asian, and a lesser number of students who identify as two or more races, American Indian, and South Pacific Islander. Student home environments include 71 languages.

Educationally, Stamford Public Schools students achieve an 88% graduation rate, with 14% of students identified as English Language Learners, 16% Students with Disabilities, and 54% classified as lower socioeconomic.

District staff consists of approximately 1,550 teachers, 427 paraeducators, 82 administrators, 150 custodians, 93 office staff, and 36 security workers.



## System Purpose for Conducting the Audit

Stamford Public Schools is hopeful that the results of the curriculum audit will lead to:

- Curriculum that is both vertically and horizontally aligned across our district;
- Curriculum that is aligned and focused on standards;
- Equitable access and opportunities for all of our students;
- Culturally responsive and representative materials and instructional practices;
- A review of content areas that have not had a curriculum review in many decades;
- Human and financial resources utilized with the commitment to implement recommendations; and
- Alignment of curriculum, assessment, and instruction.

## CMSi Audit History

The Curriculum Audit™ has established itself as a process of integrity and candor in assessing public school districts. Over the last 40 years, it has become recognized internationally as an important, viable, and valid tool for the improvement of educational institutions and for the improvement of curriculum design and delivery.

The Curriculum Audit represents a “systems” approach to educational improvement; that is, it considers the system as a whole rather than a collection of separate, discrete parts. Auditors closely examine and evaluate the interrelationships of system departments, levels, and related processes to determine their impact on the overall quality of the organization in accomplishing its primary purpose of improving student learning.

The audit process was first developed by Dr. Fenwick W. English and implemented in 1979 in

the Columbus Public School District in Columbus, Ohio. The audit is based upon generally-accepted concepts pertaining to effective instruction and curricular design and delivery, some of which have been popularly referred to as the “effective schools research.” An audit is an independent examination of four data sources: documents, interviews, online surveys, and site visits. These are gathered and triangulated to reveal the extent to which a school district is meeting its goals and objectives related to improving student learning and achievement. The process culminates in a comprehensive written report to district leaders that summarizes district strengths, audit findings, and the auditors’ recommended actions for improvement.

Curriculum Audits have been performed in hundreds of school systems in more than 46 states, the District of Columbia, and several other countries, including Canada, Saudi Arabia, New Zealand, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Bermuda. Details about the methodology employed in the audit process and biographical information about the audit team are covered in the Appendices.

## Audit Scope of Work

The audit’s scope is centered on curriculum and instruction, as well as any aspect of operations within a school system that enhances or hinders curriculum design and/or delivery. The audit is an intensive and focused “snapshot” evaluation of how well a school system such as Stamford Public Schools has been able to set valid directions for pupil accomplishment and well-being; concentrate its resources to accomplish those directions; and improve its performance, however contextually defined or measured, over time.

The Curriculum Audit does not examine any aspect of school system operations unless it pertains to the design and delivery of curriculum. For example, auditors would not examine the cafeteria function unless students were going hungry and were, therefore, unable to learn. In

some cases, ancillary findings from a Curriculum Audit are so interconnected with the capability of a school system to attain its central objectives that they become major, interactive forces that, if not addressed, will severely compromise the ability of the school system to successfully meet student needs.

The Curriculum Audit centers its focus on the main business of schools: teaching, curriculum, and learning. Auditors use five focus areas against which to compare, verify, and comment upon a district's existing curricular management practices. The focus areas reflect a management system that is ideal, but not unattainable. They describe working characteristics that any complex work organization should possess in achieving stated organizational goals while being responsive to the unique needs of its clients.

A school system that is using its financial and human resources for the greatest benefit of its students is able to establish clear objectives, examine alternatives, select and implement alternatives, measure results as they develop against established objectives, and adjust its efforts so that it achieves its objectives.

The five focus areas employed in the CMSi Curriculum Audit™ are:

- 1 District Vision and Accountability:** The school district has a clear vision and demonstrates its control of resources, programs, and personnel.
- 2 Curriculum:** The school district has established clear and valid objectives for students and clientele.
- 3 Consistency and Equity:** The school district demonstrates internal consistency and rational equity in its program development and implementation.
- 4 Feedback:** The school district uses the results from district-designed or adopted assessments to adjust, improve, or terminate ineffective practices or programs.
- 5 Productivity:** The school district has improved its productivity and efficiency, particularly in the use of resources.

The auditors report where and how district practices, policies, and processes have met or not met the criteria and expectations related to each focus area and what specific action steps are recommended for revising areas needing improvement. These findings and their corresponding recommendations are presented in detail in the expanded report.





# Stamford Public Schools Strengths

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Located in southern Connecticut, Stamford Public Schools is in the process of refining and redefining its identity as a responsive school district adjusting to meet the ever-changing needs of its students. SPS serves over 16,000 students in more than 20 school buildings. SPS exceeds other demographically similar districts on state assessments, and far exceeds those districts on assessment results for high-risk students. This, in part, is the result of the strengths listed below.

1 Commitment to the Success of All Children

4 Dedication to Curricular Alignment

2 Developing Capacity from Within

5 Communication Between School and Home

3 Devoted Teachers and Staff

*“There is such a diverse community throughout the city that the district is tasked with making sure everyone feels safe and included, while also trying to bridge the equity gap.” (Teacher)*

## 1 Commitment to the Success of All Children

SPS has established district-wide goals based on their four strategic goals. The district's mission is about more than just student success on high-stakes tests. By focusing on the overarching mission of promoting a learning organization that supports productive habits of mind, body, and heart, the district is supportive of all children, regardless of religious background, financial status, ethnicity, or any other characteristic. SPS welcomes all and supports their success. That commitment, to work together for the betterment of the children and their educational futures, demonstrates the community's desire to put the interest of the children first.

## 2 Developing Capacity from Within

SPS devotes much time, energy, and financial resources to developing the skills of existing staff. The hiring of internal candidates demonstrates a commitment to making existing staff the best they can be. Additionally, the creation of dedicated time to allow professionals to meet in teams to discuss and develop strategies to help students be successful exemplifies that commitment.

## 3 Devoted Teachers and Staff

The school district features a veteran staff with experienced teachers and a strong commitment to supporting high student achievement. Involvement in professional development and embracing a culture of supportive learning through a district focus on student success are just two examples of staff commitment to the goals of the district. The longtime experience creates a school staff with an institutional memory about the school and community to ensure that the past is not lost on the future. This is particularly important as the demographics of the school and community population change.

## 4 Dedication to Curricular Alignment

The district administration is currently in the process of establishing baseline information about current instructional practices across the district to evaluate the status of curriculum within each content area and grade level relative to Connecticut and national standards. This information will be used to inform the development of curriculum goals and objectives that will best meet future needs of a changing student population. As the district shifts to more diverse student enrollment, the board and administration recognize that they must remain resilient to meet the ever-changing needs in the community and society.

**“I have relative autonomy within my discipline to create and adjust to the learning needs of my students without cookie cutter plans.” (Teacher)**

## 5 Communication Between the School and Home

Consistent and reliable communication between school and home is critical to maintaining an open and trusting relationship between all parties. While all organizations have room to improve in this area, auditors were astounded at the vast number of positive comments from parents via the district survey about the openness and helpfulness of emails and web site postings from district administration. Of particular note were the frequent updates from the superintendent advising parents of happenings in SPS. Frequent comments were also made expressing appreciation to teachers and principals letting parents know about their child's schooling.







# Key Focus Areas

1

**District Vision and Accountability:** Vision is foundational for establishing a framework for all decision making throughout the district and for ensuring that those decisions move the district in a single direction toward its established mission and goals. These goals and expectations must be clearly defined in policy to establish the parameters within which decisions across the various levels, departments, and campuses/schools are made. A functional organizational structure is also needed to assure that all personnel have defined responsibilities that do not overlap and to assure accountability at all levels. Accountability is essential in coordinating efforts and supporting efficacy across the system.

2

**Curriculum:** Written curriculum, as the most critical tool to support high quality teaching and learning, not only defines high levels of student learning, but also supports teachers with suggestions on how to deliver differentiated, student-centered instruction that is responsive to students' needs, backgrounds, and perspectives. A strong curriculum assists teachers in meeting the needs of their students more effectively by prioritizing and defining essential learning targets in measurable terms and providing the formative assessment tools needed to diagnose and monitor student learning. Strong written curriculum also promotes equity by clarifying for teachers what on-level learning looks like.

3

**Consistency and Equity:** All students in the system should have equal access to programs and services, and no students should be excluded from the regular classroom environment at rates that are not commensurate with their peers. Equity refers to students being treated in accordance with need, rather than the same as everyone else. Allocating resources and supports equitably is necessary if all students are to be equally successful academically. Under Consistency and Equity, auditors also examine the degree to which the educational program and its supporting programs, such as ELL, Special Education, or Gifted, are defined and implemented with consistency across the system.

4

**Feedback:** Within the context of student learning expectations and a clear vision for how students should be engaged and demonstrate their learning in the classroom, having aligned assessments that measure progress and provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the system is of prime importance. The audit expects school systems to have common, aligned formative assessment tools that provide teachers and building leaders with clear and specific feedback regarding student progress and learning needs. A coordinated system must be in place for data to be collected, interpreted, and accessed by teachers so that they have valid information for planning instruction.

5

**Productivity:** When all aspects of system operations are functional and effective, productivity should be evident within existing financial constraints. Over time, as the system improves and each department and school builds stronger components that work in coordination, leaders are able to allocate resources more effectively and adjust programming so that ineffective initiatives are terminated or modified in accordance with data. Support systems necessary for effective operations are clearly tied to district goals and vision, and district facilities are likewise supportive of the educational program.

## What We Found

**Focus Area One:** Board policies are extensive, yet incomplete. Of particular note is the policy dealing with curriculum development. While extensive, it is outdated (2009) and not being routinely utilized to its maximum potential.

The district's organizational management, as reflected in the table of organization and job descriptions, is lacking needed clarity especially in terms of alignment of the primary work of the district (providing instruction to the children of SPS) and missing linkages to curriculum implementation.

The current strategic plan has expired and is currently being updated. Existing district improvement plans and schools' improvement plans contain some characteristics of effective planning; however, auditors found them insufficient in design, deployment, and delivery to guide planning efforts.

The SPS technology plan, also presently in revision, contains almost all the elements of a high-quality plan. Shortcomings were instructional technology not linked sufficiently to the written curriculum and technology integration in the delivery of instruction not at the level to transform instruction.

**Focus Area Two:** The district has a policy directed curriculum management plan in place. The plan is out-of-date and requires revision to meet minimum audit criteria for effective curriculum management plans and/or planning.

District-wide written curriculum is essentially non-existent. For those courses where written curriculum does exist, few are of the quality to provide teachers throughout the district the needed direction as to how and what to teach.

Auditors analyzed over 1,600 student artifacts and found most of them on grade level, but many required lower order thinking in the form of classroom context tasks at the elementary level. Auditors found that more secondary grade tasks required higher-order thinking skills, but in the form of the less engaging classroom context.

**Focus Area Three:** Auditors conducted brief visits to over 300 classrooms in the district to determine if the instructional practices and curriculum were consistent with district expectations. Auditors found that the majority of instruction occurring was large group, teacher-centered direct instruction. Classroom activities observed were largely at a low cognitive level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Individual campuses design their own monitoring systems and focus based on individual campus initiatives.

While professional development is valued in SPS, the training is mostly provided at the building level without the guidance and path of a comprehensive district plan. There is no district oversight to assess the impact of professional development on teaching or student learning.

Stamford Public Schools has an equity policy that would benefit from direct strategies to

**“Realigning our grading processes to better reflect learning and knowledge is much needed.” (Principal)**

operationalize policy directives. Professional development on equity and cultural understanding at both the district and building levels is in its early stages and needs to be reinforced. Absentee/suspension rates are disproportionate to the representation of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students, with Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students having higher percentages in both absences and suspensions than their populations of students in the district.

**Focus Area Four:** Auditors determined that a comprehensive student assessment plan to guide decision making for improved student achievement does not exist. While some policies that address certain aspects related to assessment are present, the policies provide insufficient oversight to manage the assessment program.

Stamford Public Schools uses a variety of assessments to monitor student progress; however, the overall scope of assessment is not adequate to provide complete and comprehensive feedback on the district's curriculum program. The expectation is that every course taught in the district has a district-wide coordinated assessment to monitor and measure student learning. Only 24% of core courses and 3% of non-core courses had a formal assessment available. Additionally, the district's process for using formative assessments for the collection and analysis of data is not consistently used.

Teachers report using data frequently to plan instruction. Auditors did not find evidence that data were being used to differentiate initial classroom instruction as little differentiation was noted in either classroom practice or written curriculum.

Students are performing near the state average on the state-required assessments in English language arts and mathematics, and performing well above districts serving similar student

populations. State assessment results, however, also revealed persistent gaps in achievement for economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and special education students with little hope of closing those gaps without aggressive intervention.

**Focus Area Five:** While a budgetary planning process is in place, the auditors found an absence of direct linkages among department goals and budget priorities. Budget development processes lack cost-benefit analyses and are not adequately linked to curricular goals and identified priorities.

The facility planning process satisfactorily meets the CMIM criteria and is being actively utilized to help guide major renovation, remodeling, and new construction in the district to address facility needs in the future. However, facility planning currently lacks elements of connectedness between education goals and philosophy as it transfers to facility design to enhance and support the learning environment.



“

[A strength is] a group of Latino parents supporting the school district and getting involved and letting them know our needs and those of our children. (Parent)

The provided campus-developed curriculum is sparse so my colleagues and I write and make our own curriculum, lessons, and resources. (Teacher)

Another strength is Stamford Public Schools' intended goals of addressing their diverse district and creating more equitable opportunities. (Teacher)

There is not a unified curriculum in reading, and while there is a math program, it no longer meets the students' needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The curriculum is pieced together without a common thread. (Principal)

[The district] has demonstrated a willingness to respond to new challenges, like a Restorative Student Support Facilitator. (Teacher)

”



# Key Recommendations

The auditors are confident that this audit report will provide the foundation for improvement efforts. However, future progress will depend, in part, on district leadership's efforts to make the tough decisions incorporated in the audit recommendations, including the willingness of the governing board to allocate additional resources necessary to implement the recommendations.

1

Revise board policies to provide clear direction for the educational program and operational functions and to clarify expectations regarding organizational coordination and decision making. Ensure that elements of sound organizational management align to the elements to the essentials of CMIM effectiveness, including the table of organization and job descriptions.

2

Update, refine, and implement a comprehensive curriculum management system that coordinates and prioritizes all curriculum management functions and tasks in the district. Develop clear expectations to guarantee deep curriculum alignment to assist teachers in knowing what and how to teach the district's written curriculum. Monitor student learning on a continuous basis to inform individualized, differentiated, and effective instruction.

3

Design and implement a comprehensive district-wide student assessment program. Utilize feedback provided by assessments to make informed decisions at all levels of the organization that positively impact student learning. Develop a comprehensive program evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of the design and delivery of district programs.

4

Develop and implement a comprehensive planning process that addresses identified weaknesses in district planning, including the existing district and school improvement plans, professional development plan, and technology plan.

5

Develop and implement strategies to fully implement the intention of the district equity policy, including a formalized process to address attendance and suspension/expulsion rates that are disproportionate for certain populations of students.

6

Incorporate cost-benefit analysis in the district's budgeting processes to guarantee full alignment of district resources to curricular goals and strategic priorities. Require student assessment data be utilized as feedback for budgeting related to the initiation, modification, continuation, or termination of programs and/or interventions. Refine facility planning to fully align with audit expectations.

The recommendations contained within this report are intended to address insufficiencies and inadequacies as determined by the audit team with the intention of assisting SPS in meeting its desired goals. The recommendations focus on several areas of curriculum management and supporting processes to lead the district to increased student performance.

School districts, generally, are to be considered rational organizations. That is, they are restructured to focus on the accomplishment of very specific goals. The work of a rational organization is conducted by a group of people who work together to pursue these common goals. The work of group members is guided, in large part, through the written documents that direct their work. This includes board policies, planning documents, written curriculum documents, formalized assessment processes, and mission and vision statements, among others. It is the duty of all group members to conduct their specific tasks within the organization consistent with the adopted written directions. In the absence of these written documents, or if group members do not abide by the documents, the goals and ideals of individual members may take precedence over, or even conflict with, group goals. School organizations are more effective and successful when rational system characteristics are adhered to and all members focus on the agreed upon goals and ideals.

The success of a school organization such as SPS revolves around the following elements: the district vision, as agreed upon by the school and community; the district mission, describing the primary work of the district; a precise written, taught, and tested curriculum, which describes the work of teachers and the learning of students; and a robust assessment system that includes not only summative outcome-based assessments, but also ongoing formative assessments to monitor student learning as it progresses. To meet these initiatives, the following recommendations should be adopted by the district and implemented over a three- to five-year period.

The district must develop policies that address all facets of the curriculum management system. This includes policies related to curriculum management, assessment planning, professional development, and building level planning. Likewise, quality district, school, and department plans must be developed that will focus planning on the main priorities of the district and reduce unnecessary impediments to success. Successful implementation of these governance and administrative recommendations will create an environment for the SPS to be successful in improving and institutionalizing a comprehensive planning process for district-wide student achievement. Collectively, these efforts will promote the district's goal of providing rigorous and relevant learning for all students.

The goal of every school district is to deliver quality instruction to each student and ensure each student's academic success. In order to achieve this goal, a school district must focus time, energy, and necessary resources to purposefully and carefully plan for a district-wide system that provides guidance for curriculum development, adoption, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and revision for all courses of study.



A comprehensive plan for curriculum management must be developed and implemented that includes all elements of a deeply aligned curriculum. This plan will direct the process of curriculum development, review, and evaluation. The plan will also identify the content, context, and cognition expectations for students in the classroom. A well-designed plan is critical to the sound design, delivery, and evaluation of the written, taught, and tested curriculum. Implementing the recommendations outlined above will promote clear direction for a comprehensive curriculum management system to establish aligned, quality curriculum that empowers teachers to faithfully deliver the district's learning objectives; improve teacher effectiveness related to instructional practices that align to district expectations; and ensure students have access to rigorous, standards-based curriculum in all classrooms.

The goal of all educators is to provide a learning environment where all students are challenged and successful. Districts that achieve that goal provide well-organized, focused, and efficient systems that effectively meet the academic needs of the student population. Professional development is a key factor in ensuring the alignment of the written, taught, and tested curriculum. A characteristic of effective districts is the presence of a comprehensive professional development plan that addresses the organizational, unit, and individual development needs for quality job performance and is integrated with other guiding plans used by the district.

While professional development is evident in the district, there is no assurance that coordination of training across the district occurs, or that information is collected or distributed in a clearinghouse function so that all units are aware of system-wide efforts to build organizational skills. The recommendation to develop a comprehensive professional development plan, when fully implemented, should allow SPS to experience improvements in job performance related to professional development, effective instructional practices,

the delivery of the written curriculum, and monitoring the delivery of instruction to ensure increased student achievement. Additionally, the steps will support creation of a systematic approach to the implementation of a high-quality instructional framework for teaching and learning in SPS.

Effective system-wide assessment processes provide district and school staff with quality feedback to guide informed instructional decisions ranging from design and delivery of curriculum to effectiveness of programs and interventions. Evaluation strategies are determined in advance, and implementation of programs and interventions are monitored on a regular basis. Reports of progress or problems identified through student achievement data provided on a periodic basis help to guide implementation, continuation, or elimination of programs.

The district must develop and adopt a comprehensive system of assessments that, when implemented, should give the district a means of ensuring consistent, appropriate use of data to assess student progress and evaluate programs and interventions, analyze results, and ensure such results are used to make sound decisions about curriculum, instruction, and programs. Additionally, assessment and evaluation data will be available for use in informing students, parents, and other stakeholders of the effectiveness of district staff in educating their students.

Additionally, the interpretation of assessment results will help guide decision making on key issues of program and curriculum productivity. To allocate resources without comprehensive evaluation of results ignores the annual opportunity to strategically re-establish priorities and aggressively pursue intended results with new direction. In the absence of such comprehensive budgeting practices, system-wide effectiveness is often a matter of chance and special interests than of intentional design. A cost-benefit process will help the district when establishing budget priorities.



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# Expanded Report

## A CMSi Curriculum Audit™ of Stamford Public Schools

August 2022

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**A Curriculum Audit™**  
**of the**  
**STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Stamford, CT**

**Date Audit Presented: August 2022**

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DRAFT

# Approach

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## Central Question for the Audit

To what extent has the Stamford Public Schools established a coordinated, valid, and comprehensive system to manage the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum?

## Focus Areas

The auditors have developed five focus areas based on the feedback and data requested by district leaders.

Following are the five areas, with the specific feedback requested:



### **District Vision and Accountability**

The school district has a clear vision and demonstrates its control of resources, programs, and personnel.



### **Curriculum**

The school district has established clear and valid objectives for students and clientele.



### **Consistency and Equity**

The school district has demonstrated internal consistency and rational equity in its program development and implementation.



### **Feedback**

The school district has used the results from district-designed or adopted assessments to adjust, improve, or terminate ineffective practices or programs.



### **Productivity**

The school district has improved its productivity and efficiency, particularly in the use of resources.

## District Background

### Brief Early District History

In Stamford, the first public schoolhouse was a crude, unheated wooden structure only 10 or 12 feet square. It was built in 1671 as part of the town's first "urban renewal" project. That year, the settlers tore down their original meeting house, outgrown at the end of 30 years, and used some of the timbers to put up a school near the present Old Town Hall on Atlantic Square.

Even in earliest colonial days, good education was of "public concernment" in Connecticut. It was mandatory as of 1657 that every settlement of 50 or more householders in the New Haven Colony, of which Stamford was a part, must have a school and a schoolmaster. Each child paid a "fare" to the schoolmaster, and the town in general paid "one-third part."

The crux of education in Stamford and elsewhere in the colony was obedience to a set of standards. Stamford's early farming society cultivated not only the rocky fields, but also the virtues of diligence, frugality, and simplicity. Next to the family, the school was the decisive factor in shaping this character. Reading, writing, and some arithmetic made up the curriculum of the little one-room school. In addition, the code of 1650 ruled that parents and schoolmasters must question children systematically each week in the principles of Christian religion. This catechism requirement persisted until 1821.

As Stamford grew, residents in several outlying areas asked for schools near their homes. For a while, small classes were held a few weeks at a time in such locations. Then, in 1702, two more schools were built, one on the west side of Mill River and one on the east side of the Noroton River. (Stamford territory at the time took in Darien and part of New Canaan, Pound Ridge and Bedford.)

By 1802, Stamford had seven school districts: the First; West of the (Mill) River; Smith's (northwestern section bordering the Stanwich line); Roxbury; Hoyt's (northern High Ridge section); Simsbury (southern High Ridge section); and Holmes (Glenbrook-Noroton section).

Stamford's first graded school, the Centre School, was built at the east end of Broad Street in 1852. It had eight different grades, and it replaced the old First District School that stood in the approximate location of the original one-room schoolhouse. After a disastrous fire, the wooden Centre School was rebuilt of brick in 1867.

By 1870, Stamford had 14 schools, and, in addition, shared 5 school districts with neighboring communities. The Stamford schools included the graded Centre School; the Green School (in the Meadow Street-Canal Street section since wiped out by the Connecticut Turnpike); West Stamford (Richmond Hill section); Bangall; Roxbury; Simsbury; Cove; Turn of River; Scofieldtown; North Stamford; High Ridge; Hunting Ridge; Long Ridge, and Farms (on Riverbank Road).

The present Stamford High School was completed on Strawberry Hill Avenue in 1928. As the city continued to grow, Rippowam High School opened on High Ridge Road in 1961 and Westhill High School on Roxbury Road in 1971.

Currently, Stamford Public Schools (SPS) serves approximately 16,600 students in the Stamford, Connecticut, region. Students are served through any of 21 school campuses, made up of 13 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, and 3 high schools. Specialized programming includes seven magnet programs and three International Baccalaureate programs. SPS serves a diverse student population of Hispanic/Latino, White, Black/African American, Asian, and a lesser number of students from two or more races, American Indian, and South Pacific Islander. Student home environments include 71 languages.

Source: Stamford Historical Society website



## District Educational Mission and Vision

### Mission

The mission of the Stamford Public Schools is to provide an education that cultivates productive habits of mind, body and heart in every student.

### Vision

The Stamford Public Schools will be a learning organization that continuously improves its effective, innovative and transformational teaching and learning. We will challenge, inspire and prepare all students to be productive contributing members of society.

### Four Strategic Goals:

1. Promote a Learning Organization That Supports Productive Habits of Mind, Body & Heart
2. Foster Productive Habits of Mind
3. Foster Productive Habits of Body
4. Foster Productive Habits of Heart



### Governance

Stamford Public Schools is currently governed by a nine-member board of education. Board members are elected to three-year terms on a staggered basis. Current board members, role on the board, and year of election are presented below:

| Name             | Role                                  | On Board Since |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Jennienne Burke  | Teaching and Learning Committee Chair | 2015           |
| Andy George      | Labor Committee Chair                 | 2016           |
| Daniel Dauplaise | Secretary                             | 2019           |
| Nicola Tarzia    | Vice President                        | 2016           |
| Joshua Esses     |                                       | 2022           |
| Fritz Chery      | Assistant Secretary                   | 2019           |
| Rebecca Hamman   | Policy Committee Chair                | 2019           |
| Jackie Heftman   | President                             | 2009           |
| Benjamin Lee     | Operations Committee Chair            | 2021           |

*Source: District provided and website*

The superintendent of the SPS is Dr. Tamu Lucero who is in her third year as superintendent of the district. The following is a list of the current and former superintendents over the past 15 years and their years of service.

| Name                             | Years                  | Duration  |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Dr. Tamu Lucero                  | April 2019-Present     | 3 years   |
| Earl Kim                         | July 2016-April 2019   | 3 years   |
| James A. Connelly (Interim)      | January 2016-June 2016 | 0.5 years |
| Dr. Winifred Hamilton            | 2012-December 2015     | 3.5 years |
| Dr. Winifred Hamilton (Interim)  | 2011-12                | 1 year    |
| Dr. Joshua P. Starr              | 2005-2011              | 6 years   |
| <i>Source: District provided</i> |                        |           |

## Enrollment

Enrollment is currently at 16,079 for 2021-22. The following exhibit presents the current district enrollment and ethnicity enrollment for the past five years.

### Exhibit 0.1: District Enrollment: All Students and Ethnicity FY 18-22

| Year   | Total Enrollment | Native American | Asian | Black/African American | Hispanic/Latino | Pacific Islander | 2 or More | White |
|--|------------------|-----------------|-------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------|-------|
| <b>FY22</b>  | 16,079           | 20              | 1,054 | 2,284                  | 7,646           | 15               | 585       | 4,475 |
| <b>% Of Total</b>  |                  | <1              | 7     | 14                     | 48              | <1               | 4         | 28    |
| <b>FY21</b>  | 16,273           | 17              | 1,138 | 2,282                  | 7,441           | 17               | 593       | 4,785 |
| <b>% Of Total</b>  |                  | <1              | 7     | 14                     | 46              | <1               | 4         | 30    |
| <b>FY20</b>  | 16,600           | 19              | 1,183 | 2,410                  | 7,391           | 19               | 566       | 5,012 |
| <b>% Of Total</b>  |                  | <1              | 7     | 15                     | 45              | <1               | 3         | 30    |
| <b>FY19</b>  | 16,053           | 22              | 1,254 | 2,457                  | 6,359           | 22               | 545       | 5,394 |
| <b>% Of Total</b>  |                  | <1              | 8     | 15                     | 40              | <1               | 3         | 34    |
| <b>FY18</b>  | 15,931           | 12              | 1,292 | 2,560                  | 6,888           | 15               | 413       | 4,751 |
| <b>% Of Total</b>  |                  | <1              | 8     | 16                     | 43              | <1               | 3         | 34    |
| <b># Change</b>  | +148             | +8              | -208  | -276                   | +758            | 0                | +173      | -276  |
| <b>% Change</b>  | 1%               | *               | -18%  | -11%                   | 11%             | *                | 42%       | -6%   |
| *Group numbers too small to be deemed reliable for percentage calculations |                  |                 |       |                        |                 |                  |           |       |
| <i>Source: EdSight Dashboard</i>   |                  |                 |       |                        |                 |                  |           |       |

Overall enrollment has increased from 15,931 to 16,079, for a five-year increase of 1%.

The present student population is comprised of Hispanic/Latino (48%), White (28%), Black/African American (14%), Asian (7%), and 2 or More (4%), with less than 1% Native American or Pacific Islander. There has been a slight shift in ethnicity over the past five years, with an increase of Hispanic/Latino students (11%), and 2 or More (42%) and a decline of White students (-6%), Asian (-18%), and Black/African American students (-11%).

The next exhibit displays the enrollment for special education services, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students (defined as students qualifying for free and reduced lunches).

**Exhibit 0.2: District Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, and Free and Reduced FY 18-22**

| Year              | Total Enrollment | SWD   | ELL   | FRL   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>FY22</b>       | 16,079           | 2,511 | 2,190 | 8,746 |
| <b>% Of Total</b> |                  | 16%   | 14%   | 54%   |
| <b>FY21</b>       | 16,273           | 2,420 | 2,174 | 9,412 |
| <b>% Of Total</b> |                  | 15%   | 13%   | 58%   |
| <b>FY20</b>       | 16,600           | 2,405 | 2,393 | 9,812 |
| <b>% Of Total</b> |                  | 14%   | 14%   | 59%   |
| <b>FY19</b>       | 16,053           | 2,213 | 2,050 | 9,211 |
| <b>% Of Total</b> |                  | 14%   | 13%   | 57%   |
| <b>FY18</b>       | 15,931           | 2,067 | 2,100 | 8,285 |
| <b>% Of Total</b> |                  | 13%   | 13%   | 52%   |
| <b># Change</b>   | +148             | +444  | +90   | +461  |
| <b>% Change</b>   | 1%               | +21%  | +4%   | +6%   |

Source: EdSight Dashboard

As shown in the exhibit, 2,511 students currently receive special education services, which is 16% of the total district student population. The number of students enrolled in English Language Learner services is currently 2,190 (14%) and Free and Reduced Lunch programming at 8,746 (54%). The enrollment in Special Education services, ELL services, and Free and Reduced Lunches has increased over the past five years, 21%, 4%, and 6%, respectively. At the same time, overall enrollment has increased by just 1%.

**Financial Background**

For the 2020 fiscal year, the board of education adopted a budget with anticipated receipts and expenditures of funds from local, state, and federal sources totaling over \$313 million. The next two exhibits indicate the sources and amounts of funds received and expended by the board.

**Exhibit 0.3: District Expenditures by Category FY 20**

| Category                                     | Amount               |
|--|----------------------|
| Instruction                                  | \$202,858,611        |
| Support Services—Students                    | 18,122,509           |
| Support Services—Instruction                 | 23,939,362           |
| Support Services—General Administration      | 7,010,846            |
| Support Services—School Based Administration | 15,620,492           |
| Central and other Support Services           | 4,884,959            |
| Operation and Maintenance of Plant           | 27,268,411           |
| Student Transportation Services              | 13,777,469           |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>\$313,482,657</b> |

Source: EdSight, CT Dept of Education

**Exhibit 0.4: Revenue Source by Percent 2015-16 to 2019-20**

| Source                                       | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Local  | 85.2    | 85.5    | 85.0    | 84.1    | 84.9    |
| State  | 11.0    | 10.8    | 11.3    | 12.2    | 12.0    |
| Federal                                      | 2.9     | 2.9     | 3.1     | 3.0     | 2.7     |
| Tuition & Other                              | 0.9     | 0.8     | 0.6     | 0.7     | 0.4     |
| <i>Source: EdSight, CT Dept of Education</i> |         |         |         |         |         |

As displayed in **Exhibit 0.3**, total appropriations are \$313,482,657. The largest categories are Instruction (\$203M), Operation and Maintenance of Plant (\$27M), and Instructional Support Services (\$23M). As is typical in Connecticut, the vast majority of revenue is derived from local community sources. Eighty-five percent of funding is derived locally (see **Exhibit 0.4**). This percentage has remained stable for the past five years.

# Findings

## FOCUS AREA ONE: The School District has a Clear Vision and Demonstrates Its Control of Resources, Programs, and Personnel.

Quality control is the fundamental element of a well-managed educational program. It is one of the major premises of local educational control within any state’s educational system.

The critical premise involved is that, via the will of the electorate, a local school board establishes local priorities within state laws and regulations. A school district’s accountability rests with the school board and the public.

Through the development of an effective policy framework, a local school board provides the focus for management and accountability to be established for administrative and instructional staffs, as well as for its own responsibility. Such a framework enables the district to create meaningful assessments and use student learning data as a critical factor in determining the overall success of the educational program.

Although educational program control and accountability are often shared among different components of a school district, ultimately, fundamental control of and responsibility for a district and its operations rest with the school board and top-level administrative staff.

### *What the Auditors Expected to Find in the Stamford Public Schools:*

#### Focus Area One: District Vision and Accountability

Under Focus Area One, auditors review the scope and quality of policy (governance) and planning across the school system. A school system meeting Curriculum Management Audit™ Focus Area One is able to demonstrate its control of resources, programs, and personnel.

#### Common indicators

- A clearly defined vision for instructional delivery and student engagement in district classrooms that is congruent with best practice;
- A curriculum policy framework that:
  - Is centrally defined and adopted by the school board,
  - Establishes an operational framework for management that permits accountability,
  - Reflects state requirements and local program goals,
  - Reflects the necessity to use achievement data to improve school system operations, and
  - Defines and directs change and innovation within the school system to permit focus of its resources on priority goals, objectives, and mission;
- A curriculum that is centrally defined and adopted by the board;
- A functional administrative structure that coordinates and facilitates the design and delivery of the system’s curriculum (programs and services) and achievement of goals;
- A direct, uninterrupted line of authority from governing board to the superintendent/chief executive officer and other central office officials to principals and classroom teachers;
- Documentation of school board and central office planning for the attainment of goals, objectives, and mission over time; and
- Organizational development efforts that are focused to improve system effectiveness.

## Overview of What the Auditors Found in the Stamford Public Schools:

This section is an overview of the findings that follow in the area of **Focus Area One**. Details follow within separate findings.

The auditors found the Stamford Public Schools' board policies met audit expectations in the areas of curriculum, consistency, and feedback. Policies in the curriculum management areas of district vision and productivity were either weak or absent.

In an analysis of the district table of organization, elements of quality design were not present, and some critical positions for quality control were absent. Job descriptions, while present for most positions, displayed a lack of linkages to curriculum implementation. Many job descriptions need to be reviewed, updated, and re-approved by the board, particularly in the area of curriculum responsibilities.

District and building level improvement plans are present and utilized throughout the district to help guide decision making. The current strategic plan has expired and is presently being updated and revised. Although the existing district improvement plan and school improvement plans contain some characteristics of effective planning, auditors found them inadequate in design, deployment, and delivery to guide planning efforts.

The SPS technology plan contains almost all elements of a high-quality plan and is in the process of being updated. Although technology accessibility (1:1 for students) is high, usage by students observed by auditors during their visits to classrooms was less than 25%. In a review of written curriculum documents, instructional technology is not clearly linked to the written curriculum, and integration of technology in the delivery of instruction is not at the level to transform instruction.

**Finding 1.1: Stamford Public Schools' policies met audit expectations in the areas of Curriculum, Consistency and Equity, and Feedback. Weak or absent policies in the curriculum management areas of District Vision and Accountability and Productivity have contributed the district's inability to maintain control over all aspects of the curriculum and educational program.**

For policies to provide the necessary operational framework, they must be useful in controlling and directing decision making. Policies must reflect the expectations set by the board and focus the resources of the district toward meeting specific goals. For policies to drive practice, they must be specific, easily referenced, and the first-source documents to provide individual and system guidance. Conversely, when policies are absent, outdated, vague, or ignored, effective guidance for administrators or staff is missing. The result may be that decision making is left to individual or special interest discretion. In such instances, coherence is absent in systems, operations, and actions. Educational outcomes may be unpredictable and/or fragmented and may not reflect board intent.

The auditors examined all policies provided by the school district. They selected for further analysis those policies most directly related to curriculum management and organizational support and assessed them by comparing their content to 25 policy criteria that comprise the Curriculum Management Improvement Model (CMIM). This model serves as the basis for evaluating key documents in a CMSI Curriculum Audit™.

The auditors found the Stamford Public Schools' board policies inadequate overall in both content and specificity to guide all necessary aspects of curriculum management and the district's educational programs. Audit expectations were met in the areas of Curriculum, Consistency and Equity, and Feedback. Policies in the curriculum management areas of Vision and Accountability and Productivity were either weak or absent. The 2010 adopted *Board Policy 6121: Standards-Based Curriculum* provides guidance



for overall district curriculum decision making, as well as a great amount of detail concerning curriculum management within the district. However, auditors learned that this policy is not consistently used in planning curriculum (see **Finding 2.1**).

### School Policies

Auditors analyzed district policies and administrative regulations and rated them against the 25 Curriculum Management Improvement Model (CMIM) criteria for adequacy. District policies were accessed through the policy link on the district website. The following exhibit displays the list of policies and regulations the auditors reviewed. Only those policies and regulations related to curriculum management or support of curriculum were selected for review.

#### Exhibit 1.1.1: Board Policies and Regulations Reviewed by Audit Team

| Policy/Reg Number | Policy Title   | Date of Most Recent Adoption/Revisions |
|-------------------|--|--|
| 1316.1            | School Climate   | 4/2015                                 |
| 2000              | Concept and Roles in Administration                                | 8/2019                                 |
| 2001              | Participatory Management   | 10/2015                                |
| 2000.1R           | Board-Superintendent Relations                                     | 10/2015                                |
| 2010              | Goals and Objectives   | 10/2015                                |
| 2100              | Administrative Staff Organization                                  | 10/2015                                |
| 2112              | Professional Development   | 10/2015                                |
| 2120              | Administrative Organization  | 10/2015                                |
| 2130              | Job Descriptions   | 3/2008                                 |
| 2131              | Chief Administrative Officer                                       | 10/2015                                |
| 2200              | Administrative Operations  | 10/2015                                |
| 2221              | Administrative Councils and Committees                             | 10/2015                                |
| 2230              | Control and Communication Channels and Systems                     | 10/2015                                |
| 2231              | Policy and Regulation Systems                                      | 10/2015                                |
| 2231R             | Policy and Regulation Systems                                      | 10/2015                                |
| 2232              | Administrative Reports/School District Annual Report/Announcements | 10/2015                                |
| 2234              | Treatment of Outside Reports                                       | 10/2015                                |
| 2300.1            | Statement of Standards for School Leaders                          | 10/2015                                |
| 3000              | General [Fiscal] Policy Statement                                  | 11/2000                                |
| 3000R             | Adherence to Principles  | 11/2000                                |
| 3010              | Equivalent Funding   | 11/2000                                |
| 3110              | Budget Preparation   | 11/2000                                |
| 3110R             | Budget Preparation   | 11/2000                                |
| 3420              | Classification of Expenditures                                     | 11/2000                                |
| 3420R             | Classification of Expenditures                                     | 11/2000                                |
| 3510              | Operation and Maintenance of Plant                                 | 11/2000                                |
| 3510R             | Operation and Maintenance of Plant                                 | 11/2000                                |
| 3517              | Security of Building and Grounds                                   | 3/2017                                 |
| 3517R             | Security of Building and Grounds                                   | 3/2017                                 |
| 3542              | Nutrition Programs   | 3/2017                                 |

| Policy/Reg Number | Policy Title  | Date of Most Recent Adoption/ Revisions |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 4001              | Staff Development   | 7/2001                                  |
| 4111.3            | Minority Teacher Recruitment                                    | 9/2016                                  |
| 5000              | Equal Opportunity   | 7/2000                                  |
| 5000.1            | Equity and Diversity - Purpose                                  | 4/2021                                  |
| 5001              | Nondiscrimination   | 6/2000                                  |
| 5117              | Assignment of Students to Schools                               | 11/2007                                 |
| 5135              | Promotion and Retention   | 5/2001                                  |
| 5135.2            | High School Graduation Requirements                             | 7/2002                                  |
| 6119              | Philosophy of Educational Program                               | 7/2000                                  |
| 6120              | Goals of Instructional Program                                  | 7/2000                                  |
| 6121              | Standards-Based Curriculum                                      | 2/2010                                  |
| 6124              | Career Education  | 7/22/2000                               |
| 6144              | Online Courses  | 2/2021                                  |
| 6144R             | Online Courses  | 2/2021                                  |
| 6146              | Instruction – Graduation Requirements                           | 9/2020                                  |
| 6146.3            | Grading and Weighting of Grades                                 | 8/2019                                  |
| 6152              | Assignment of Students for Instructional Programs               | 7/2000                                  |
| 6154              | Homework Policy   | 9/2013                                  |
| 6160              | Computers: Web Sites, Pages                                     | 6/2002                                  |
| 6160R             | Computers: Web Sites, Pages                                     | 6/2002                                  |
| 6161.3            | Selection of Instructional Materials Other Than Textbooks       | 7/2000                                  |
| 6172              | Family Living, Sex Education, and Personal Safety               | 7/2000                                  |
| 6174              | Parent-Teacher Communication                                    | 7/2000                                  |
| 9000              | Role of the Board and Members (Powers, Purposes, Duties)        | 12/2014                                 |
| 9005              | Statement of Integrity  | 12/2014                                 |
| 9010              | Limits of Authority   | 12/2014                                 |
| 9011              | Accountability  | 12/2014                                 |
| 9012              | Legal Responsibility and Board of Education                     | 12/2014                                 |
| 9030              | Board-Staff Communications                                      | 12/2014                                 |
| 9040              | Duties of the Board   | 12/2014                                 |
| 9130              | Committees  | 12/2014                                 |
| 9230              | Orientation of Board Members                                    | 8/2006                                  |
| 9240              | Board Member Professional Development                           | 12/2014                                 |
| 9271              | Conduct for Board Members                                       | 12/2014                                 |
| 9311              | Formulation, Adoption, Amendments of Policies/Bylaws            | 12/2014                                 |
| 9311.1            | Board Policies  | 12/2014                                 |
| 9312              | Board Review of Regulations                                     | 12/2014                                 |
| 9313              | Formulation, Adoption, Amendments of Administrative Regulations | 12/2014                                 |
| 9324.1R           | Board Calendar  | 12/2014                                 |
| 9400              | Monitoring Products and Processes                               | 12/2014                                 |

The auditors analyzed the documents listed in the previous exhibit for congruence with the CMIM criteria for adequacy. Of 261 policies presented for potential review, 70 with connections to curriculum topics were chosen for analysis.

Auditors noted that for many policies, over 20 years have passed since the last review. Additionally, few policies have been adopted or revised in the past six years.

The CMIM system uses 25 criteria, each with specific points of analysis. The criteria, each with multiple characteristics, are organized into five focus areas. For each characteristic, a score of 0 or 1 point is awarded based on an individual policy or several policies considered together. To be considered adequate 70% of the total possible points assigned to a focus area are required. **Exhibits 1.1.2 through 1.1.6** show the auditors' rating of policies arranged by the five focus areas and their criteria and characteristics.

The following exhibit presents the information about the ratings relative to **Focus Area One**—District Vision and Accountability.

**Exhibit 1.1.2: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Criteria and Characteristics of Quality Policies for Focus Area One**

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics  |  | Relevant Policies | Auditors' Rating |
|---|--|-------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area One: District Vision and Accountability  |  |                   |                  |
| 1.1 Philosophical statements of the district instructional approach   |  |                   |                  |
| Clearly specifies and defines the district vision for instruction and student engagement in the classroom, providing a framework for the selection of strategies, approaches, and student activities to support student learning (TH/LH). | 1316.1, 2000, 2300.1, 6119, 6120, 6121 |                   | X                |
| Communicates clear expectations for the teacher's role and responsibilities in the classroom.   |  |                   |                  |
| Includes a general statement about curriculum and the instructional approach that should be used, such as standards-based, competency-based, outcome-based, etc.  |  |                   | X                |
| Includes clear expectations for all students to be assured academic success across all content areas and grade levels, regardless of background, language proficiency, income level, or any other factors.                                |  |                   | X                |
| Requires vision, expectations, and goals for specific programs and content areas, in congruence with the district expectations, philosophy, and vision (such as Special Education, ELL, etc.).  |  |                   | P*               |
| 1.2 A taught and assessed curriculum that is aligned to the district written curriculum   |  |                   |                  |
| Defines role and purpose for written curriculum: the definition of student learning.  | 6121                                   |                   |                  |
| Expects alignment to standards (state or national).   |  |                   | X                |
| Includes clear expectations regarding deep alignment to high-stakes assessment.   |  |                   |                  |
| Directs that delivery of the curriculum align with the overarching vision, mission, and expectations of the district.   |  |                   |                  |
| 1.3 Board adoption of the written curriculum  |  |                   |                  |
| Requires the review of new or revised written curriculum prior to its adoption and expects that the content and suggestions for how to teach the curriculum align with all district expectations.   | 9012                                   |                   | P*               |
| Expects the design and development of curriculum to be seen as the most critical processes and product to support high quality classroom instruction that aligns to district vision and expectations.                                     |  |                   |                  |
| Requires review and revision of curriculum on a periodic cycle.   |  |                   | X                |

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics  |   | Relevant Policies    | Auditors' Rating |
|---|---|----------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area One: District Vision and Accountability  |   |                      |                  |
| 1.4 Accountability for the alignment of the written, taught, and tested (WTT) curriculum through a clearly defined organizational structure and corresponding roles and responsibilities  |   |                      |                  |
| Identifies the overarching role of defining the organizational structure as the most critical means in supporting the alignment of the WTT curriculum and connecting design with delivery across the system.  | 2001, 2001.1R, 2010, 2120, 2130, 2200, 2221 |                      | X                |
| Expects an organizational chart that is annually reviewed, presented to the board, and approved by the superintendent.  |   |                      | P*               |
| Requires clearly defined job descriptions that specify responsibilities and that correspond to the table of organization.   |   |                      | P*               |
| Directs and specifies the processes for the formation of decision-making bodies (e.g., cabinet, task forces, committees) in terms of their composition and decision-making responsibilities, to ensure consistency, non-duplication of tasks, and product requirements.         |   |                      | X                |
| Identifies appraisal procedures as essential in evaluating the effectiveness of all personnel in improving student learning and in determining the quality of adopted programs and interventions.   |   |                      | X                |
| 1.5 Long-range, system-wide planning  |   |                      |                  |
| Requires as part of the district planning process that the superintendent and staff think collectively about the future and that the discussion take some tangible form (allows for flexibility without prescribing a particular template).                                     | 6119, 9012                                  |                      | P*               |
| Requires the development of a system-wide, long-range plan that is updated annually; incorporates system-wide student learning targets; and is evaluated using a variety of both formative and summative measures.  |   |                      | P*               |
| Expects school and other district plans to be congruent with the vision, goals, and expectations of the district long-range plan.   |   |                      |                  |
| Expects plans that coordinate expectations for curriculum design and development, professional development, student assessment and program evaluation, and other critical functions across the district, in order to assure alignment with district vision, mission, and goals. |   |                      |                  |
|   |   | Total Met            | 8/21             |
|   |   | Total Percentage Met | 38%              |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met  |   |                      |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.  |   |                      |                  |
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#### Focus Area One—District Vision and Accountability:

The policies related to this focus area received 8 of 21 possible points, for a rating of 38%, below the expectation of 70% for adequacy. *Board Policy 6121* requires a standards-based curriculum, which is aligned to either state, national, and international standards or professional organization content areas (e.g., National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) (Criteria 1.1 and 1.2). *Board Policy 6121* also describes the district philosophy of education (Criterion 1.1) and is inclusive of all student groups regardless of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background (Criteria 1.2). *Board Policy 9012* requires the board to “consider, revise, and adopt any changes in the curriculum,” but does not expressly require adoption of all curriculum. While *Board Policy 6121* describes a five- to seven-year curriculum revision cycle, board approval is not included as part of the process. *Board Policies 2001* and *2010* establish the decision-

making structure for the district, including roles and responsibilities for stakeholders. While *Board Policy 2120* requires the superintendent to develop a table of organization, there is no requirement that it be presented to the board. Job descriptions, addressed in *Board Policy 2130*, are required for administrative personnel only, and no quality criteria are described. Finally, *Board Policies 9012* and *6119* require the board to “annually establish educational priorities for the school-district,” and to “evaluate and reevaluate educational objectives, teaching methods and materials in order to meet the changing needs of students and community.” However, there is no expectation for congruency in planning among the various district departments, or to utilize all forms of assessment to establish an evaluation process.

The following exhibit presents information about the ratings relative to **Focus Area Two**—Curriculum.

**Exhibit 1.1.3: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Criteria and Characteristics of Quality Policies for Focus Area Two**

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics   | Relevant Policies | Auditors' Rating |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area Two: Curriculum   |                   |                  |
| 2.1 Written curriculum that defines the content that must be learned and provides suggestions for how to support that learning in congruence with district vision.   |                   |                  |
| Requires curriculum to define, sequence, and bundle (pace) the content (concepts, skills, knowledge, vocabulary, etc.).  | 6121, 6144        | X                |
| Requires curriculum to provide adequate suggestions for how teachers should approach the content and how students should practice and demonstrate the content, in alignment with district vision.                                |                   | X                |
| Requires curriculum to specify a variety of measures to monitor progress that also reflects the district vision.   |                   | X                |
| Directs that curriculum provide scaffolds and supports so teachers have the tools they need to differentiate.  |                   | X                |
| Requires the curriculum to allow for flexibility in pacing and instructional decision making so teachers have the ability to respond to students' needs and interests/ backgrounds, while maintaining on-grade-level learning.   |                   | X                |
| Requires the written curriculum to support the needs of specific student groups with suggestions for strategies and activities in an integrated fashion (within the curriculum itself, not as a separate or isolated component). |                   | X                |
| Includes clear expectations for assuring user-friendliness, feasibility, and access when electronically housing/providing access to curriculum.  |                   | X                |
| Specifies how the curriculum supports learning in both in-person and virtual formats.  |                   | X                |
| 2.2 Periodic review/update of the curriculum and aligned resources and assessments   |                   |                  |
| Requires the development of procedures to both formatively and summatively review the quality and effectiveness of all curriculum in all grade levels and content areas.   | 6121              | X                |
| Requires the annual review of test banks, benchmark assessments, and other assessment instruments for deep alignment (meets and exceeds in CCC dimensions) with the district or state accountability system.                     |                   | P*               |
| Requires the evaluation of all assessment instruments for alignment to the district curriculum in all three dimensions: content, context, and cognitive type.  |                   |                  |
| Requires the periodic review of all resources for alignment to the content of the district curriculum in all three dimensions (CCC), and prior to adoption for use.  |                   |                  |
| Requires the review of all externally-adopted assessment instruments for alignment to the district's vision and philosophy for instructional approach.   |                   | X                |

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics  |      | Relevant Policies | Auditors' Rating |
|---|------|-------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area Two: Curriculum  |      |                   |                  |
| 2.3 Textbook/resource alignment to curriculum and assessment  |      |                   |                  |
| Requires textbooks/resources to be regularly reviewed and the resource revision/adoption cycle to align with the curriculum revision cycle.   | 6121 |                   | X                |
| Directs review of all new instructional resource materials for content, context, and cognitive type alignment to the district curriculum and assessment.  |      |                   |                  |
| Directs district staff to identify discrete areas where alignment is missing and provide teachers with supplementary materials to address gaps in alignment (missing content, inadequate contexts, etc.).   |      |                   | X                |
| Requires that all resources used in the district reflect the diversity and backgrounds of its students.   |      |                   | X                |
| 2.4 Content area emphasis   |      |                   |                  |
| Directs the yearly identification of subject areas that require additional focus and/or support based on a review of assessment results.  |      |                   | X                |
| Within subject areas, requires identification by administration of specific objectives, contexts, cognitive types, and instructional practices to receive budgetary support.  |      |                   | X                |
| Requires focused professional development and coaching to support the instructional delivery of identified priorities within content areas.   |      |                   | X                |
| 2.5 Program integration and alignment to the district's written curriculum  |      |                   |                  |
| Directs that all subject-related (e.g., reading, Title I) and school-wide (e.g., tutoring, DARE, AVID) programs be reviewed for alignment to the written and assessed curriculum, as well as the district vision and expectations for student engagement. | 6121 |                   | X                |
| Requires written procedures for both formative and summative evaluation of all new subject-related and school-wide programs before submission to the board for approval.  |      |                   | X                |
| Directs administrative staff to prepare annual recommendations for subject-related and school-wide program revision, expansion, or termination based on student achievement.  |      |                   | X                |
| Total Met   |      |                   | 19/23            |
| Total Percentage Met  |      |                   | 83%              |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met  |      |                   |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.  |      |                   |                  |
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### Focus Area Two—Curriculum:

The policies related to this focus area received 19 of 23 possible points, for a rating of 83%, exceeding the expectation of 70%. *Board Policy 6121* contains the elements of the district curriculum management plan. As a result, most characteristics described above are contained in this policy. Auditors noted that the plan has not been revised or altered since its adoption in 2010. Those characteristics not met were largely due to missing required focus on the three components of curriculum content, context, and cognition, all three of which are essential to create a *deeply* aligned curriculum.



The following exhibit presents information about the ratings relative to **Focus Area Three**—Consistency and Equity.

**Exhibit 1.1.4: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Criteria and Characteristics of Quality Policies for Focus Area Three**

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics  | Relevant Policies            | Auditors' Rating |
|---|------------------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area Three: Consistency and Equity  |                              |                  |
| 3.1 Delivery of the adopted district curriculum   |                              |                  |
| Identifies curriculum as the definition of what students should learn and student learning as the primary goal for delivering the district curriculum.  | 6121                         | X                |
| Requires all personnel to deliver the curriculum as approved by the board.  |                              | p*               |
| Identifies an instructional model for delivering the curriculum in response to student need, as evidenced in data from multiple assessment tools.   |                              | X                |
| Requires an annual report to the board regarding the status and effectiveness of curriculum delivery.   |                              | X                |
| Specifies the strategies, approaches, and student engagement that reflect the district's vision and expectations.   |                              | X                |
| Requires the delivery of curriculum to reflect consistent content expectations (on-grade-level) across the district within a grade level or course (horizontal coordination).   |                              | X                |
| Requires the delivery of curriculum to be sequenced and spiraled from one grade level to the next, consistently across the district (vertical articulation).  |                              | X                |
| Specifies the role of the curriculum in supporting lesson planning (but not providing them).  |                              | X                |
| 3.2 Professional development for staff in the delivery of the district curriculum   |                              |                  |
| Identifies the primary purpose of professional development: to support the effective delivery of the district curriculum to improve and increase student learning district-wide.  | 2001, 2100, 2112, 4001, 6121 | X                |
| Requires all professional development initiatives to align to the district vision, goals, and expectations related to student engagement and learning.  |                              | X                |
| Directs the development and implementation of a district professional development plan focused on effective curriculum delivery that is congruent with the district long-range plan and vision for the system.  |                              | X                |
| Requires a process whereby staff are coached over time in the implementation of professional development initiatives.   |                              | X                |
| Directs the regular evaluation of the impact of professional development on student learning, using both formative and summative measures.  |                              | X                |
| 3.3 Monitoring, coaching, and supporting the delivery of the district curriculum  |                              |                  |
| Specifies the purposes of curriculum monitoring and coaching and expectations concerning the process.   | 6121                         | X                |
| Specifies other measures to determine strengths, weaknesses, and inconsistencies in the curriculum delivered to students (collection of student work, walk-throughs by central office curricular personnel, student surveys, data from common assessments).             |                              | X                |
| Delineates the district philosophy concerning classroom visits/monitoring and coaching procedures, and distinguishes between coaching and the appraisal process.  |                              | X                |
| Requires periodic school and classroom data-gathering reports from administrators detailing the status of the delivery of the curriculum across the district, and links the reports to professional development and curriculum revision planning for the upcoming year. |                              | X                |

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics   | Relevant Policies | Auditors' Rating |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area Three: Consistency and Equity   |                   |                  |
| 3.4 Student access to the curriculum, resources, programs, and services  |                   |                  |
| Requires equal student access to the curriculum and instructional resources.   | 5000, 6121        | X                |
| Requires that identification of students by gender or ethnicity for special programs (AVID, GT, SPED) be proportional with their representation in the general population.   |                   | X                |
| Directs the development of procedures for fast-tracking students who lack sufficient prerequisite skills for courses such as AP, honors, etc., but need more challenging content.  |                   | X                |
| Requires all students to have appropriate instructional materials for a variety of learning levels and modes, and appropriate facilities to support the learning environment necessary to deliver the district curriculum. |                   | X                |
| Specifies expectations for all students to have equal access to on-level, rigorous, and meaningful content, with scaffolding and supports when gaps exist to assure academic success.                                      |                   | X                |
| 3.5 Equitable and bias-free educational environment  |                   |                  |
| Has clear expectations for ensuring all students have an equitable school experience free from discrimination and bias.  | 2100, 5000, 6121  | X                |
| Defines equity and specifies district goals related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.   |                   | X                |
| Communicates expectations for addressing equity and eradicating discrimination and bias across the district.   |                   | X                |
| Establishes guidelines for equity within the context of the district's instructional vision and philosophy that inform and direct curriculum design, development, and revision and professional development initiatives.   |                   | X                |
| Requires an annual review of all data related to assuring and maintaining equity (access to programs, rigor, high quality teaching/learning, discipline and retention data, resource allocation).                          |                   | X                |
| Total Met  |                   | 26/27            |
| Total Percentage Met   |                   | 96%              |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met   |                   |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.   |                   |                  |
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### Focus Area Three—Consistency and Equity:

The policies related to this focus area received 26 of a possible 27 points for a rating of 96%, which exceeds the expectation of 70%. *Board Policy 6121* contains nearly all the criteria expected for a high-quality policy document related to **Focus Area 3**. The one criterion not meeting quality expectations was deemed to be only partially evident due to the following: while it is assumed that staff will teach the district curriculum, policy does not state that ALL PERSONNEL will teach the district curriculum approved by the board. (There is no requirement for all curriculum to be board approved.)

The following exhibit presents information about the ratings relative to **Focus Area Four—Feedback**.

**Exhibit 1.1.5: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Criteria and Characteristics of Quality Policies for Focus Area Four**

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics  | Relevant Policies | Auditors' Rating |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area Four: Feedback   |                   |                  |
| 4.1 A comprehensive system to assess student learning, monitor progress, and diagnose student learning needs  |                   |                  |
| Requires the development and implementation of a district student assessment process that goes beyond the state accountability assessment system and includes both formative and summative measures that align to the district's vision, philosophy, and goals.   | 6121              | X                |
| Requires the development and implementation of a district formative student assessment process that is differentiated to address variations in student achievement (both above and below grade level).  |                   | X                |
| Requires assessment instruments to be more rigorous in content, context, and cognitive type than external, high-stakes assessments.   |                   |                  |
| Requires all assessment instruments be evaluated for validity and all evaluation tools (rubrics, checklists) be supported with ongoing training and reliability checks.   |                   |                  |
| Specifies expectations for students to develop self-assessment skills through the use of authentic, performance-based measures with clear and valid rubrics.  |                   | X                |
| Includes expectations for teachers to take responsibility for monitoring student progress and for periodically evaluating their needs in-person rather than via electronic measures.  |                   | X                |
| 4.2 A program assessment process  |                   |                  |
| Directs the development and implementation of a district program evaluation process.  | 2001, 6121        | X                |
| Requires each proposed program to have an evaluation process (includes both formative and summative evaluations) before that program is adopted and implemented.  |                   | X                |
| Directs the program assessment process to link with district planning initiatives, including the strategic/long-range plan, school improvement plans, and plans that support the management of curriculum and alignment of its written, taught, and tested forms. |                   |                  |
| 4.3 Use of data from assessments to determine effectiveness of instruction and programs   |                   |                  |
| Requires the disaggregation of assessment data at the school, classroom, student subgroup, and student level to determine instructional, curriculum, and program effectiveness.   | 6121              | X                |
| Requires classroom teachers to track and document individual student progress and mastery in core content areas.  |                   | X                |
| Specifies expectations that data be used in planning instruction.   |                   | X                |
| Requires the development of modifications to the curriculum and/or programs as needed in response to disaggregated assessment data to bring about effectiveness and efficiency.   |                   | X                |

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics  | Relevant Policies | Auditors' Rating |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area Four: Feedback   |                   |                  |
| 4.4 Reports to the board about program effectiveness  |                   |                  |
| Requires yearly reports to the board regarding program effectiveness for all new programs for the first three years of operation.   | 2131, 2232        | X                |
| Requires reports to the board every three years for long-term programs.   |                   | X                |
| Requires summative reports to the board every five years for all content areas before any curriculum revisions or major materials acquisition, with the reports delivered prior to the curricular adoption cycle. |                   | X                |
| Total Met   |                   | 13/16            |
| Total Percentage Met  |                   | 81%              |
| Key: X = Met, Blank = Not Met   |                   |                  |
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#### Focus Area Four—Feedback:

The policies in this focus area received 13 of a possible 16 points for a rating of 81%, exceeding the expectation of 70%. As noted earlier, *Board Policy 6121* contains many of the characteristics of high-quality curriculum management pertaining to **Focus Area Four**. *Board Policy 6121* addresses many of the elements of Criterion 4.1 with the exception of alignment of assessment through curriculum content, context, and cognition, and the expectation that assessment validity be determined. Under Criterion 4.2, while monitoring program and curriculum effectiveness is expected, no links to long-term or school improvement plans are required.

The following exhibit presents information about ratings relative to **Focus Area Five—Productivity**.

#### Exhibit 1.1.6: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Criteria and Characteristics of Quality Policies for Focus Area Five

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics   | Relevant Policies      | Auditors' Rating |
|--|------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Focus Area Five: Productivity</b>   |                        |                  |
| <b>5.1 Program-centered budgeting that is responsive to planning and system priorities</b>   |                        |                  |
| Directs development of a budget process that requires program evaluation, identification of specific measurable program goals before the budget process begins, and documented costs to ensure that expenditures are aligned within revenues and cost-benefit analysis is facilitated.                                     | 2131,<br>9011,<br>3010 |                  |
| Requires adherence to a program-centered budgeting process that includes incremental budgeting based on different program types, delivery, and quality for all curriculum areas (process provides evidence of tangible connections between allocations and anticipated program outcomes or accomplishments).               |                        |                  |
| Directs full implementation of a program-centered budgeting process that includes incremental funding possibilities, a process for evaluating options, and the use of program evaluation data linked to budget allocations (process enables program budget decisions to be based upon documented results and performance). |                        |                  |

| Audit Criteria and Characteristics  |             | Relevant Policies | Auditors' Rating |
|---|-------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Focus Area Five: Productivity   |             |                   |                  |
| 5.2 Resource allocation tied to curriculum priorities   |             |                   |                  |
| Requires a budget that allocates resources according to documented needs, assessment data, and established district curriculum and program goals and priorities.  | 6121        |                   |                  |
| Requires a budget that may be multi-year in nature, provides ongoing support for curriculum and program priorities, and connects costs with program expectations and data-based needs.                    |             |                   |                  |
| Directs a budget that provides resources needed to achieve system priorities over time and demonstrates the need for resources based on measurable results and/or performance of programs and activities. |             | X                 |                  |
| 5.3 Environment to support curriculum delivery  |             |                   |                  |
| Directs facilities that enable teachers to work in an environment that supports adequate delivery of the curriculum.  | 3510, 3510R | X                 |                  |
| Directs consideration of multi-year facilities planning efforts to adequately support the district curriculum and program priorities.   |             |                   |                  |
| Directs facilities planning linked to future curriculum and instructional trends and to the teaching-learning environment incorporated in the documented system mission and vision statements.            |             |                   |                  |
| 5.4 Support systems focused on curriculum design and delivery   |             |                   |                  |
| Provides a clear connection between district support services and the achievement of the district curriculum design and delivery, and evidence of optimization within the system.                         | 9011        |                   |                  |
| Requires formative and summative evaluation practices for each support service to provide data for improving these services and documented evidence of improvement over time.                             |             |                   |                  |
| Requires periodic reports to the board with recommendations for continuing, revising, and/or developing new support services to enhance fulfillment of the mission, including needs-based data.           |             |                   |                  |
| 5.5 Data-driven decisions for the purpose of increasing student learning  |             |                   |                  |
| Requires all departments or divisions of the district to identify how their responsibilities connect to supporting/ensuring student learning.   | 9011        |                   |                  |
| Directs the development of specific requirements for using data from student assessment to inform decision making for all functions of district operations.   |             |                   |                  |
| Directs the development of specific requirements for data analysis that lead to improved student learning for all operations of the district.   |             |                   |                  |



| Audit Criteria and Characteristics   |  | Relevant Policies | Auditors' Rating |
|--|--|-------------------|------------------|
| <b>Focus Area Five: Productivity</b>   |  |                   |                  |
| <b>5.6 Change processes for long-term institutionalization of district priority goals</b>  |  |                   |                  |
| Requires the identification of strategies, grounded in documented assessment of program success or efficacy, to be used by the district to ensure long-term institutionalization of change.  |  |                   |                  |
| Directs the development of school improvement plans that address the use of specific change strategies at the building level to ensure the institutionalization of change and improved results or performance.   |  |                   |                  |
| Directs that all district, department, and program plans incorporate procedures for change strategies to ensure the institutionalization of change for improvement; and include procedures with formative and summative practices that provide data about change implementation and effectiveness. |  |                   |                  |
| <b>Total Met</b>   |  |                   | <b>2/18</b>      |
| <b>Total Percentage Met</b>  |  |                   | <b>11%</b>       |
| Key: X = Met, Blank = Not Met  |  |                   |                  |
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#### Focus Area Five—Productivity:

Few policies relative to **Focus Area Five** were presented for review, which resulted in 2 points of a possible 18, for a rating of 11%. *Board Policy 3010* requires the board to provide equivalent funding, comparable services, equivalent level of professional staff, and equivalent curriculum and instructional material among schools with the same grade levels; but is silent in the area of linking process, goals, program evaluation, and costs. *Board Policy 9011* requires the board to request “resources necessary for the achievement of goals.” No other policy expectations regarding funding, budget processes, resource allocation, facilities and environment, data-driven decision making, or cost-benefit analysis within the financial framework were presented for review.

The exhibit below presents the summary ratings for all five focus areas based on auditors’ analysis of the adequacy of board policies to direct curriculum design and delivery in the organization.

#### Exhibit 1.1.7: Summary Ratings of the Auditors’ Analysis of Curriculum Management Improvement Model Criteria and Characteristics of Quality Policies

| Focus Area                              | Number of Criteria | Number of Possible Points | Points Given | Percentage of Points Relative to 70% Standard for Adequacy |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------|--|
| One: District Vision and Accountability | 5                  | 21                        | 8            | 38   |
| Two: Curriculum                         | 5                  | 23                        | 19           | 83   |
| Three: Consistency and Equity           | 5                  | 27                        | 26           | 96   |
| Four: Feedback                          | 4                  | 16                        | 13           | 81   |
| Five: Productivity                      | 6                  | 18                        | 2            | 11   |
| <b>Overall Rating For all Criteria</b>  | <b>25</b>          | <b>105</b>                | <b>68</b>    | <b>65%</b>   |
| ©2021 CMSi                              |                    |                           |              |  |

Only 65% of the characteristics of school policies were rated as adequate to guide the design, delivery, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the curriculum.

While 65% overall adequacy does not meet minimum audit expectations, three focus areas, in fact, met most of the criteria (83%, 96%, and 81%). The question then becomes not “Are there policies?” but rather, “Are the existing policies being used?” While auditors were presented with evidence that some policies are utilized to guide district decision making, others are not used consistently if at all. The most egregious example is *Board Policy 6121* dealing with all aspects of the curriculum program (see **Finding 2.1**). Auditors were told by several district personnel that the policy is not routinely used. Policies become meaningless when not used. An effort must be made to not only strengthen those focus areas where policies do not exist, but also to refine the existing policies. Leadership must require adherence to policies, emphasizing the importance of policies in developing actionable behaviors by district staff in the completion of their duties.

Stamford Public Schools’ policies cannot effectively guide certain critical curriculum management functions unless they address linkages between the mission and vision of the district related to its curriculum, and establish control over the productivity of resources. Quality criteria have been met in the areas of Curriculum (**Focus Area 2**), Consistency and Equity (**Focus Area 3**), and Feedback (**Focus Area 4**). However, policies were either weak or absent in the areas of District Vision and Accountability (**Focus Area 1**) and Productivity (**Focus Area 5**). Without clear direction and oversight through board policies in all areas, decisions regarding curriculum management are inconsistent and ineffective.

**Finding 1.2: Effective organizational management criteria were not reflected in the administrative structure depicted in the table of organization, and some critical positions for quality control were absent. Job descriptions are deficit in the area of curriculum linkage. Many need to be reviewed, updated, and re-approved by the board, particularly in the area of curriculum responsibilities.**

A functional organization has an administrative structure that arranges personnel to ensure the effective and efficient design and delivery of the curriculum and sound system operations and functions. Administrative operations, which are solely under the superintendent’s authority, provide the mechanism for the board of education to translate its values, goals, policies, and intentions into action.

In an educational institution, positions are required in five key areas:

- Defining organizational focus, goals, and purposes (policy and planning)
- Designing the work with authorized outcomes and suggested ways and means to accomplish organizational objectives (curriculum)
- Implementing the work within organizational specifications and guidelines (instruction)
- Measuring achievement of the work and providing feedback on results (assessment)
- Managing functions to support the work (finance, human resources, support services)

To accomplish its purposes, the board of education needs to provide the superintendent with sufficient staff to carry out relevant quality control functions and to appropriately manage the work. (See Full Inclusion section below.)

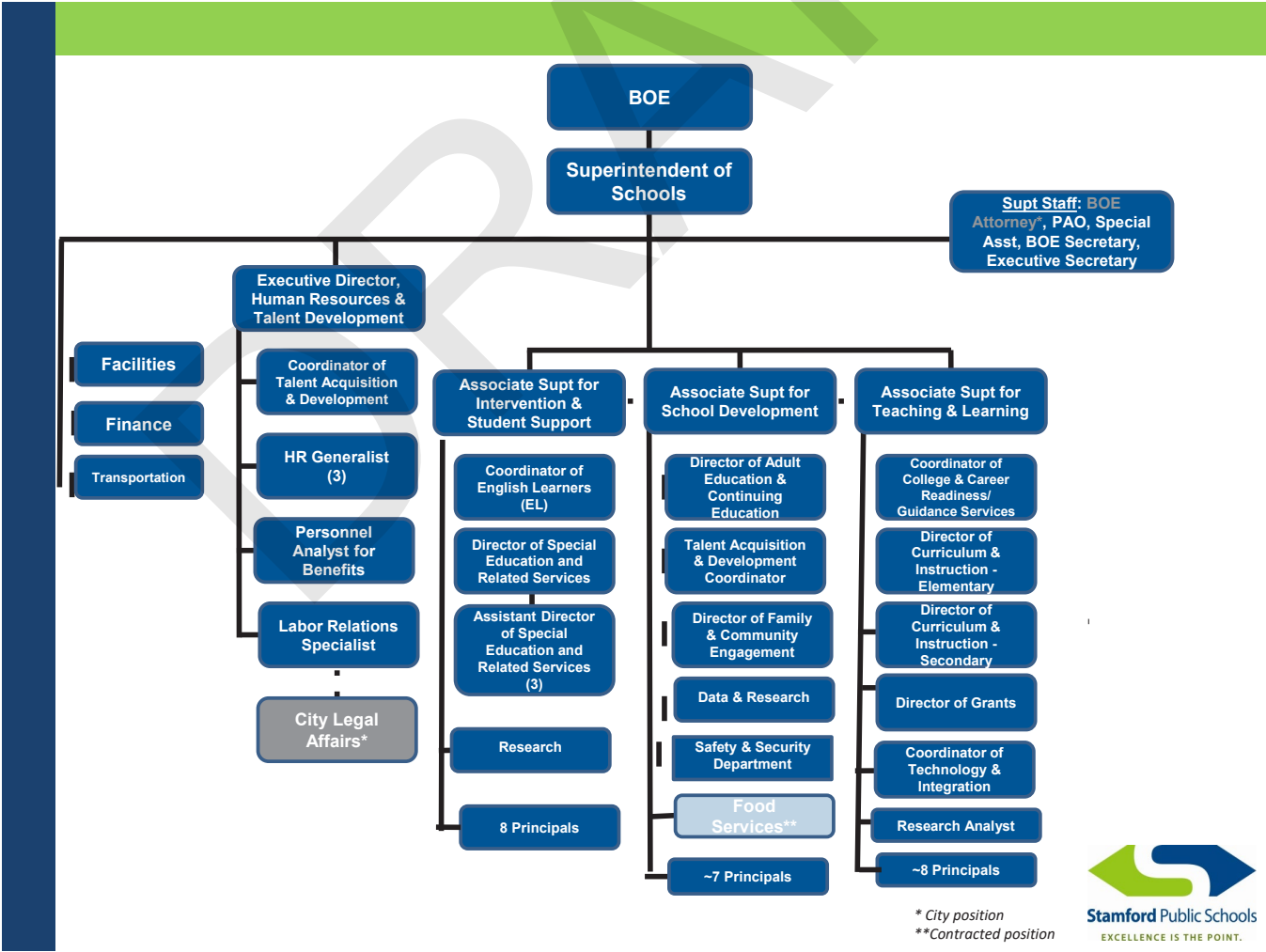
Job descriptions are clearly written descriptions of duties and qualifications of persons employed by the school district. They provide employees with information regarding the necessary background to successfully prepare for the job and how positions are to function within the organization, including assignment of supervisory relationships and the critical components of the job. A clear set of job descriptions supports the district’s internal and external communications by explaining who performs what duties within the organization. Adequately designed job descriptions also allow the district to accurately graphically depict administrative relationships on the table of organization.

A review of relevant board policies concluded that policies partially meet expectations in the area of decision-making structure, as described in **Exhibit 1.1.2**, Criterion 1.4. Auditors determined that the district table of organization is ineffective to provide information to the board as there is no requirement that it be reviewed at least annually by the board of education. Additionally, the table of organization violates several rules of organizational management, most notably in the areas of span of control, logical grouping, scalar relationships, chain of command, separation of line and staff function, and full inclusion. Auditors determined that job descriptions do not meet audit criteria. Policies are minimal related to required job descriptions and their configuration. A further discussion of both the organization table and job descriptions follows.

**Organizational Structure**

Clear organizational relationships are important for the effective management of a school system. Successful educational organizations assign and arrange personnel by function to ensure the effective and efficient design and delivery of curriculum. The simplest expression of these relationships is an organizational chart that clearly depicts employee relationships and line/staff relationships. The graphic representation of these relationships and supervisory duties is referred to as a table of organization (T/O). *Board Policy 2120* requires the superintendent to develop a table of organization, but board review is not required. Auditors were presented with a table of organization for the SPS illustrated below.

**Exhibit 1.2.1: Organizational Chart for Stamford Public Schools**



The auditors' evaluation was based on the following principles of sound organizational management presented in the following exhibit.

**Exhibit 1.2.2: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Principles of Sound Organizational Management**

| Principle                                     | Explanation  |
|---|--|
| <b>Span of Control</b>                        | The range of supervisors to personnel should be 7-12 as a maximum number of persons who are supervised on a daily face-to-face-basis.  |
| <b>Chain of Command</b>                       | A person should have only one superior to avoid being placed in a compromised decision-making situation.   |
| <b>Logical Grouping of Functions</b>          | The clustering of similar duties and tasks is employed in order to keep supervisory needs to a minimum (ensuring economy of scale).  |
| <b>Separation of Line and Staff Functions</b> | Those administrators carrying out the primary mission of the district should not be confused with those supporting it. Also, note that in reporting relationships, line administrators should report only to other line administrators, never staff administrators. This keeps the line of accountability for the primary mission of the district uncomplicated. |
| <b>Scalar Relationships</b>                   | Roles of the same title and remuneration should be depicted graphically on the same general horizontal plane.  |
| <b>Full Inclusion</b>                         | All persons working within the district carrying out its essential functions should be depicted on the table of organization. Clerical, office, and support staff positions are not considered to be essential functions for the table of organization.  |

The auditors examined the SPS table of organization during its site visit on May 9-13, 2022. Auditors found the table of organization does not meet the six principles of sound organizational management.

The narrative below describes each principle and the auditors' analysis of the evidence used to determine adequacy.

**Span of Control**

Violations of the principle are present for all three associate superintendent positions. The table indicates 14 direct reports for the Associate Superintendent of Intervention and Student Support, 13 for the Associate Superintendent of School Development, and 14 for the Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. An excessive number of personnel to supervise could compromise the ability of the associate superintendent to effectively execute this role. Additionally, personnel supervised by each the associate superintendents include both line and staff positions, which violates Separation of Line and Staff Functions.

**Chain of Command**

Teachers and assistant principals are not present on the table (see Full Inclusion below), making it impossible to determine Chain of Command for teachers or assistant principals.

**Logical Grouping of Functions**

The various personnel assigned to each of three associate superintendents appear to be randomly assigned. While each supervises principals, they are also assigned a variety of positions or departments that seem incongruous to the specialization of each area. For example, Adult Education and Family and Community Engagement are assigned to the Associate Superintendent of School Development. However, the addition of Safety and Security and Food Services appear not to "fit" with the other areas.

They are not logically grouped. These other areas would be best assigned to the Operations section of the organizational chart. Similar examples can be found for the other two associate superintendents.

### **Separation of Line and Staff Functions**

A key element of line and staff functions is that those administrators carrying out the primary mission of the district should not be confused with those supporting it. This is easily identifiable in the area of operations vs. curriculum and instruction. However, even within the area of curriculum and instruction, there must be *separation between those who write and assess the curriculum as opposed to those who implement the curriculum*. Consequently, auditors look for clear separation between those personnel who develop and write curriculum, design and plan district assessments, and provide staff development from those who provide direct delivery of that curriculum to students (primarily building administrators and teachers). These separate reporting lines should reach all the way to the superintendent.

Several violations were found within the table of organization.

- Principals are listed as reporting to the associate superintendents. Since the associate superintendents also supervise all curriculum and instructional practices, the principals would more logically be placed in a separate line with other personnel responsible for implementation of the written curriculum (teachers and assistant principals). As currently listed, principals (line positions) are included with curriculum writers, staff developers, and assessment writers (staff positions).
- As discussed in Logical Grouping of Functions, several Operations positions are supervised by personnel who also supervise line positions.

Essentially, the issue with line and staff positions is that there is no separation between the two in the current table or organization. Line positions are indistinguishable from staff positions.

### **Scalar Relationships**

Positions of similar responsibility and remuneration should be shown on the same horizontal plane to reflect responsibility requirements within the organization.

- One executive director is shown on a higher horizontal plane than the associate superintendents, rather than with the other executive directors.
- All positions are shown on a higher plane than campus principals. Normally principals, who have a great deal of responsibility, should be on level with executive directors or others with similar responsibilities and remuneration.
- Directors, coordinators, assistant directors, specialists, analysts, and generalists seem to be randomly placed on the table and not according to their similar levels of responsibility and remuneration.

### **Full Inclusion**

Teachers and assistant principals are missing from the table and constitute a violation of this principle.

Auditors also heard from many district employees that the table of organization is in frequent flux and changes repeatedly. In an online survey 75% of building administrators indicated that the table of organization “demonstrated clear lines of authority;” however, comments expressed some frustrations: “There have been several reorganizations, and it is not clear what each role does in the organization,” and “Who is in charge of curriculum? Teaching and Learning, individual buildings, the EL department for EL?”



In conclusion, substantive issues contribute to the inadequacy of the organizational structure and sub-optimize quality control.

### Job Descriptions

Job descriptions provide a vital function in any organization. Job descriptions help attract the right team member for each position, and potential applicants can gauge their “fit” for the post. Job descriptions can assist in measuring performance and training needs. A well-written job description can ensure the duties and responsibilities of the position and the candidate’s attributes align with the organization’s mission and vision. Job descriptions also provide a glimpse of the organizational structure and the chain of command. *Policy 2120*, revised in October 2015, states that creating and maintaining job descriptions are part of the Superintendent of School’s responsibilities.

Stamford Public Schools provided 98 job descriptions in the shared drive for auditor review. In addition, the superintendent’s job description is outlined in the board policy *2000* series. However, the auditors determined that most job descriptions did not contain the essential features necessary, and many were outdated or incomplete.

When determining the adequacy of job descriptions, auditors look at each of the following areas for completeness, clarity, and timeliness: qualifications; chain of command; responsibilities/duties; relationship to the creation, maintenance, and evaluation of the curriculum; board approval; and board approval date. The following exhibit provides the rubric used to rate the district’s job descriptions.

#### Exhibit 1.2.3: Audit Ratings for Job Descriptions

| Rating     | Description  |
|------------|--|
| Missing    | No statement made  |
| Inadequate | Statement made, but missing essential characteristics            |
| Adequate   | Statement made, but weak in curriculum quality control elements  |
| Strong     | Clear statement, including several aspects of curriculum quality |
| Exemplary  | Clear statement, including design and delivery of curriculum     |
| NA         | Not applicable   |

Below is the auditors’ analysis for each presented job description.

#### Exhibit 1.2.4: Auditors’ Ratings of Job Descriptions for Stamford Public Schools

| Position   | Date    | Qual.    | Chain of Command | Resp.    | Curr. Link |
|--|---------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|
| Acceleration Coach   | 8/21    | Adequate | Adequate         | Adequate | Missing    |
| Administrative Intern Elementary                             | Missing | Adequate | Missing          | Missing  | Missing    |
| Administrative Intern Secondary                              | 2/17    | Adequate | Adequate         | Adequate | Inadequate |
| Art Teacher  | Missing | Adequate | Missing          | Adequate | Missing    |
| Assistant Director of Special Education and Related Services | 4/18    | Adequate | Adequate         | Adequate | Inadequate |
| Assistant Principal - Elementary                             | Missing | Adequate | Adequate         | Adequate | Missing    |
| Assistant Principal - High School                            | Missing | Adequate | Adequate         | Adequate | Missing    |
| Assistant Principal - MS                                     | Missing | Adequate | Adequate         | Adequate | Missing    |
| Assoc. Supt. for Intervention and Student Support            | 4/18    | Adequate | Inadequate       | Adequate | Missing    |
| Assoc. Supt. for School Development                          | 4/18    | Adequate | Inadequate       | Adequate | Missing    |
| Assoc. Supt. for Teaching and Learning                       | 4/18    | Adequate | Inadequate       | Strong   | Strong     |

| Position   | Date    | Qual.     | Chain of Command | Resp.      | Curr. Link |
|--|---------|-----------|------------------|------------|------------|
| Asst. Director of Early Childhood                                | 4/20    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Athletic Director SAU  | 5/18    | Strong    | Adequate         | Strong     | NA         |
| BCBA   | 6/19    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | NA         |
| Bilingual Native Language Support Teacher                        | 4/20    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Bilingual New Arrival Teacher                                    | 4/20    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| Bilingual Teacher  | 4/20    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| BOE Reading Teacher  | 6/20    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Business Education Teacher                                       | 9/91*   | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Career and Technical Education Teacher                           | 5/20    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Coordinator of Alternate Education                               | 4/18    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Coordinator of College and Careers                               | 5/18    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| Coordinator of English Learners                                  | 4/18    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Coordinator of Talent Acquisition and Development                | 5/18    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Coordinator of Tech. Integration                                 | 4/21    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| CTE Computer Science Teacher                                     | 6/19    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| Dean of Students   | 10/19   | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Department Head English Learners                                 | 4/21    | Strong    | Adequate         | Strong     | Strong     |
| Department Head MS Counseling                                    | 5/20    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Strong     |
| Department Head School Counseling                                | 5/20    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Strong     |
| Director of Adult Education                                      | 4/18    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment - Elementary | 2/20    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Strong     |
| Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment - Secondary  | 2/20    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Strong     |
| Director of Early Childhood                                      | 5/18    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Strong     | Missing    |
| Director of Facilities   | 9/20    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Director of Family and Community Engagement                      | 4/18    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Director of Finance  | 7/19*   | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Director of Innovative Programs                                  | 9/19    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Director of Special Ed. and Related Services                     | 9/18    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| ELA Teacher Secondary  | 9/91    | Strong    | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Elementary Principal   | Missing | Exemplary | Adequate         | Strong     | Adequate   |
| Elementary Teacher   | 9/91    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| English Learner Teacher  | 4/20    | Strong    | Strong           | Strong     | Adequate   |
| Exec. Director of HR and Talent Development                      | 2/21    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Facilities Manager Custodial Job                                 | 10/20   | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Facility Manager   | 5/19    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Foreign Language Teacher Secondary                               | 9/91*   | Adequate  | Missing          | Inadequate | Inadequate |
| Guidance Adult Ed.   | 7/18*   | Adequate  | Missing          | Inadequate | Inadequate |
| Health Teacher   | 9/91*   | Strong    | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| High School Principal  | Missing | Adequate  | Missing          | Strong     | Adequate   |
| HS Department Head   | 4/21    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| HS Literacy Intervention and Support Specialist                  | 4/20    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |

| Position                                      | Date    | Qual.     | Chain of Command | Resp.      | Curr. Link |
|---|---------|-----------|------------------|------------|------------|
| IB Design Teacher                             | 5/18    | Strong    | Missing          | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| IEP Compliance Support Teacher                | Missing | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Instructional Coordinator PK                  | Missing | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| IST 3-5                                       | 5/16    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| IST K-5                                       | 4/13    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Labor Relations Specialist                    | 6/18    | Exemplary | Strong           | Strong     | NA         |
| Math Instructional Coach                      | 6/16    | Adequate  | Missing          | Strong     | Inadequate |
| Math Secondary Teacher                        | 9/91    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Media Specialist                              | 9/91    | Strong    | Missing          | Strong     | Missing    |
| Middle School Principal                       | Missing | Adequate  | Adequate         | Strong     | Adequate   |
| MS Literacy Support Teacher                   | 4/13    | Strong    | Strong           | Strong     | Strong     |
| MS Tech and Innovation Teacher                | 5/18    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| Music Teacher                                 | 9/91*   | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| New Arrivals Teacher                          | 4/20    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Physical Education Teacher                    | 9/91*   | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Prekindergarten Teacher                       | 9/91*   | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Program Facilitator                           | 10/19   | Strong    | Adequate         | Strong     | Strong     |
| Program Facilitator II Adult Ed.              | 10/19   | Strong    | Adequate         | Strong     | Strong     |
| Public Affairs Officer                        | 5/18    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| Reading Teacher                               | Missing | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Restorative Student Support Facilitator       | 7/21*   | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | NA         |
| School Counselor                              | 5/19    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| School Family Resource Facilitator            | 10/19   | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | NA         |
| School Psychologist                           | 1/07    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Science Teacher                               | Missing | Strong    | Missing          | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Secondary Literacy EL Reading Specialist      | 4/20    | Strong    | Missing          | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Social Studies Teacher                        | 9/91    | Adequate  | Missing          | Inadequate | Missing    |
| Social Worker                                 | Missing | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Sp. Ed. Literacy Support Specialist           | 6/19    | Strong    | Strong           | Strong     | Missing    |
| Special Education Teacher                     | 4/06    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Speech/Lang. Pathologist                      | Missing | Strong    | Missing          | Adequate   | Missing    |
| SRBI Support Teacher                          | 4/13    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Strong     | Inadequate |
| Superintendent                                | 10/15   | Missing   | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| Teacher Leader for Student Support (ES)       | 7/20    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Teacher Leader for Student Support (MS)       | 7/20    | Strong    | Missing          | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Tech. Integration and Support Specialist      | 7/20    | Adequate  | Missing          | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| TOSA English Learners Prof. Dev. and Coaching | 4/21    | Strong    | Adequate         | Adequate   | Exemplary  |
| TOSA Humanities (ES)                          | 4/21    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Exemplary  | Exemplary  |
| TOSA SHS ECS                                  | 6/21    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Adequate   |
| TOSA STEM (ES)                                | 6/21    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Exemplary  | Exemplary  |
| TOSA Tech.                                    | 4/21    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| TPDL SHS WHS                                  | 4/16    | Adequate  | Adequate         | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| Transitional Coordinator                      | 10/16   | Exemplary | Missing          | Exemplary  | Exemplary  |

| Position  | Date    | Qual.      | Chain of Command | Resp.      | Curr. Link |
|---|---------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|
| Trauma Support Specialist   | 6/15    | Adequate   | Adequate         | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Upward Bound Project Director   | Missing | Adequate   | Adequate         | Adequate   | Missing    |
| Vocational Agriculture Teacher  | 9/91*   | Strong     | Missing          | Adequate   | Inadequate |
| <b>Adequate, Strong, and Exemplary</b>  |         | <b>97</b>  | <b>62</b>        | <b>94</b>  | <b>30</b>  |
| <b>Percentage</b>   |         | <b>99%</b> | <b>63%</b>       | <b>96%</b> | <b>31%</b> |
| <b>Percent of Descriptions containing all necessary components and rating Adequate, Strong, or Exemplary across all criterion</b> |         |            |                  |            | <b>22%</b> |
| Key: * = Board approval not specified, NA = Not Applicable  |         |            |                  |            |            |
| Sources: District shared drive and Board Policy 2000 Series   |         |            |                  |            |            |

As shown above, of the 98 job descriptions provided to the auditors, 97 (99%) were rated exemplary, strong, or adequate in the area of Qualifications.

Regarding the specification of providing the chain of command in each job description, this area was a relative weakness for the district. For example, 35 of the job descriptions do not have the supervisor listed, resulting in a 63% adequate or above rating in this category. In addition, although *Board Policy 2120* states, “All teachers shall be subject to the immediate supervision of their respective Principals...,” many teacher positions did not list this relationship in the job description, where it would be expected. Also, the Associate Superintendents report to the Deputy Superintendent according to their job descriptions. As the Deputy Superintendent position no longer exists within the district, these descriptions should be updated to reflect the change.

In the Duties/Responsibilities category, 94 job descriptions (96%) analyzed by the auditors were rated either Exemplary, Strong, or Adequate. An example of a job description rated exemplary in this area is the Teacher on Special Assignment STEM. In addition, all student populations (Special Education, English Learners) are mentioned. The job description is clear, thorough, and detailed.

The auditors examined each job description to determine the employee’s relationship to the district curriculum’s creation, maintenance, and evaluation. They found this characteristic to be the weakest in the district’s job descriptions. Of those employees who teach, support, or supervise teaching (84 job descriptions), 54 were rated as having an inadequate curriculum connection or missing the curriculum connection. Fourteen positions do not require interaction with curriculum development (e.g., Public Affairs Officer). These missing or inadequate components resulted in an adequacy percentage of 31%. All teachers, directors, coordinators, and teacher support professionals, such as the Trauma Support Specialist and Special Education professionals, should and can add their expertise to curriculum development. Two examples of curriculum connections in job descriptions that the auditors rated exemplary were for Teachers on Special Assignment for Elementary STEM and Elementary Humanities.

Most job descriptions were dated based on the exact date of board approval; others had a date, but it was unclear if the job description was board-approved. Some job descriptions were not dated, e.g., Speech-Language Pathologist and Social Worker. Some job descriptions were very outdated, being approximately 30-years-old (e.g., Prekindergarten Teacher, Elementary Teacher, and Physical Education Teacher).

In summary, most job descriptions contained an adequate description of the components, Qualifications and Duties/Responsibilities. The weakest areas were in the Chain of Command and Curriculum Responsibilities. Some job descriptions were outdated, while others were dated without a clear connection to board of education approval. Approximately 22%, were considered adequate or above in all categories and contained all the necessary components.



## Summary

Auditors determined that the current table of organization contains weaknesses and does not meet audit expectations of high quality. Twenty-two percent of job descriptions meet audit expectations for all components. Many need to be reviewed, updated, and re-approved by the board, particularly in the area of curriculum responsibilities (see **Recommendation 1**).

**Finding 1.3: District and building level improvement plans are present and utilized throughout the district. District leaders are in the process of creating a new strategic plan. Although the district improvement plan and school improvement plans contain some characteristics of effective planning, auditors found them inadequate to guide planning efforts.**

Planning is the process school districts use to connect their day-to-day work with their vision for the district's future and high level student achievement. To achieve this vision, district leaders need a picture of the future that is clear and shared by all, a well-defined and coordinated planning process, and a system-wide focus on how best to use human and material resources. When the planning process generates written long-range and annual plans that are focused on the vision, manageable in scope, and supported by relevant data, the district can move intentionally and systematically toward fulfillment of its vision. Without quality planning, district's resources will be used less efficiently, and achievement of district goals will be less likely.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of how planning is conducted in the Stamford Public Schools and to assess the quality of district and building level plans, the auditors interviewed board members, district administrators, building administrators, and teachers. Auditors also conducted online surveys of building administrators, teachers, and parents. In addition, they examined board policies and analyzed plans.

Overall, auditors found that the Stamford Public Schools is in the process of revising the 2017-2022 strategic plan to guide the district for the next five years. The district published a 2019-2020 Annual Report to the Community in which they highlighted their accomplishments: "...the stories featured in the following pages illustrate how our collaborative spirit has driven our students and district forward." Auditors also determined that while planning takes place at the district and building level, the planning does not result in plans that meet CMIM criteria with fidelity.



*Cloonan MS students watercolor in art class*

The District Strategic Improvement Plan guides the school improvement plans. The district improvement plan is missing key components; it does not provide the direction needed to develop an adequate plan for guiding the district instructional process. Building improvement plans followed the district improvement plan format and consistently incorporated district goals; however, collectively, they did not meet all quality audit standards.

The following are the goals listed in the strategic plan and improvement plans: Goal #1—Promote Learning Organization that Supports, Productive Habits of Mind, Body & Heart; Goal #2—Foster Productive Habits



of Mind; Goal #3—Foster Productive Habits of Body; Goal #4—Foster Productive Habits of Heart. The improvement plans also included the following key areas for growth: English Language Arts/Reading, Math, Attendance, Social Emotional Learning, and Communication. The plans have a reasonable number of goals and key areas for growth.

### District Improvement Planning and Plans

To understand how planning is conducted in Stamford Public Schools and to assess the planning documents, the auditors reviewed board policies and various district and building-level plans. Stamford Public Schools provided the auditors with a District Strategic Plan, District Strategic Improvement Plans, Elementary School Strategic Improvement Plans, Middle School Strategic Improvement Plans, and High School Strategic Improvement Plans. The auditors found the plans inadequate to direct district efforts in achieving higher levels of learning for all students.

The following exhibit lists the district plans presented for review by the auditors.

#### Exhibit 1.3.1: Plans Presented to the Audit Team for Review

| Plan                                | Date      |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Strategic Plan                      | 2017-2022 |
| District Strategic Improvement Plan | 2021-2022 |
| District Strategic Improvement Plan | 2020-2021 |

The auditors rated the district plans against 17 Curriculum Management Improvement Model (CMIM) criteria for planning and quality. The criteria and ratings are presented in the following exhibit.

#### Exhibit 1.3.2: CMIM Planning Criteria and Rating of District Strategic Plan

| District Improvement or Strategic Planning Criteria   | Auditors' Rating |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Planning Process:</b>  |                  |
| <b>1. Directed by written expectations:</b> The governing board has placed into policy the expectation that the superintendent and staff collectively discuss the future, and that this thinking should take some tangible form without prescribing a particular template, allowing for flexibility as needed.                                | p*               |
| <b>2. Responsive to vision:</b> Leadership has implicit or explicit vision of the general direction in which the organization is going for improvement purposes. That vision emerges from having considered needs and the future changes required, within the context of the organization, and relevant to the teaching and learning process. | X                |
| <b>3. Based on data:</b> Data are considered and inform the planning process, vision, and system directions/initiatives.  |                  |
| <b>4. Drives daily decision making:</b> Leadership makes day-to-day decisions regarding the implicit or explicit direction of the system and facilitates movement toward the planned direction.   | p*               |
| <b>5. Is emergent and fluid:</b> Leadership adjusts to discrepancies between current status and desired status, facilitates movement toward the desired status, and is fluid in planning efforts (emergent in nature).  | p*               |
| <b>6. Is collaborative and coordinated:</b> Staff are involved in a purposeful way throughout various aspects of the planning processes (in multiple capacities) and are aware of their role in implementing the district vision and direction (goals).   |                  |

| District Improvement or Strategic Planning Criteria   |  | Auditors' Rating |
|---|--|------------------|
| <b>Plan Quality and Alignment:</b>  |  |                  |
| <b>7. Clear and measurable:</b> The plan has focused goals that are clear and measurable, incorporate research, and are focused on the areas of greatest need.  |  | P*               |
| <b>8. Reasonable and feasible:</b> The plan is reasonable; it has a feasible number of goals and objectives for the resources (financial, time, people) available. The number of strategies and supportive actions are also feasible in the time allotted.  |  | P*               |
| <b>9. Implementation strategies:</b> The plan includes specific actions that, based on research, are likely to realize or accomplish the change needed. Actions are explicit; they are measurable and clearly support implementation.   |  |                  |
| <b>10. Capacity building:</b> The plan clearly delineates supports needed for actions or strategies to be implemented effectively and for the vision to be sustained, such as professional development, coaching, orientation, resources, etc.  |  |                  |
| <b>11. Internal reliability and congruence:</b> All goals and actions within the plan are congruent with one another and work in coordination to accomplish overarching goals.  |  | P*               |
| <b>Plan Implementation and Evaluation:</b>  |  |                  |
| <b>12. Aligned professional development:</b> Professional development endeavors are aligned to system planning goals and initiatives.   |  | P*               |
| <b>13. Budget:</b> Budget planning for change is done in concert with other planning, with goals and actions from those plans driving the budget planning.  |  | P*               |
| <b>14. Accountability:</b> Each action/strategy is assigned to a specific person or department with a suggested timeline for completion.  |  |                  |
| <b>15. Evaluation plan and implementation:</b> There is a written plan to evaluate whether the objectives of the plan have been met (not to evaluate whether or not the activities have taken place). Evaluation components of plans are actions to be implemented; plans are evaluated for their effects or results, and they are then modified as needed. There is both frequent formative evaluation and annual summative evaluation, so that plans are revised as needed. |  |                  |
| <b>16. Monitoring:</b> Systems are in place and are being implemented for assessing the status of activities, analyzing the results, and reporting the outcomes that take place as the plan is designed and implemented.  |  | P*               |
| <b>17. System-wide coordination of effort:</b> There is evidence that all departments, campuses, and levels of the system are working in congruence toward the shared mission, vision, and goals of the district.   |  |                  |
| <b>Total Met</b>  |  | <b>1/17</b>      |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>   |  | <b>6%</b>        |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met  |  |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.  |  |                  |
| ©2021 CMSi  |  |                  |

As shown in the exhibit above, the district partially met 9 and fully met 1 of the 17 criteria. The district has engaged in strategic planning and school improvement planning. There is awareness of the direction in which leadership wants to move the district. The district strategic plan is reflected in the school improvement plans, although it is not clear how the district plans guide daily actions across the district. All school administrators referred to the district improvement plan and goals as their guide to develop their school improvement plan. "It [school improvement plan] is pretty much done for us. We have four core areas; it's what we are doing in the building with the four core areas. Everybody has to do early lit,

math, attendance, social emotional.” (Building Administrator). A more specific discussion of the ratings is presented below.

### **Planning Process (Criteria 1-6)**

SPS has a district improvement plan. Expectations for a planning process are sparsely referenced in policy as described in **Exhibit 1.1.2**, Criterion 1.5. The district has goals to improve reading, math, attendance, socio-emotional learning, and communication, although these goals are weak and not consistently supported.

The auditors learned that the district developed a common mission statement as part of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan: “The mission of the Stamford Public Schools is to provide an education that cultivates productive habits of mind, body and heart in every student.” Subsequently, the district adopted the following vision: “The Stamford Public Schools will be a learning organization that continuously improves its effective, innovative and transformational teaching and learning. We will challenge, inspire and prepare all students to be productive contributing members of society.”

Building administrators indicated in comments that one of the four goals is consistently supported by the district. “We push kids to rise academically; that is the most beautiful thing that we do. The district has taken a lot of new initiatives to be culturally responsive and meet the socio-emotional needs.” And, “Campus PD has been SEL for the past two years.”

The district plans call for beginning of the year, middle of the year, and end of the year outcome measures. However, a system to monitor the success of planning is missing. The district did not provide documentation to measure success.

The auditors found an overall awareness of the strategic plan and the related four goals, although actions across the district show limited coordination. Principals and district administrators function in isolation and not in response to clearly defined actions.

The district has been responsive to unexpected changes and demands, as stated in the 2019-2020 Annual Report to the Community: “Our SPS staff, students and families continue to respond with resilience and embrace challenge.” However, there is no evidence of systematic coordination throughout the district.

### **Plan Quality and Alignment (Criteria 7-11)**

The district improvement plan contains goals, objectives, and outcome measures. However, outcomes do not include data elements to determine the potential impact following implementation. The plan has goals and action steps that are clear and focused on the district identified areas of greatest need although not measurable.

No documents were presented to the auditors to rate criteria 9 and 10. Furthermore, the plan does not have strategies to support the logical deployment of district resources at campuses or in departments, and no specific approaches are identified to provide direction for implementation. The strategic plan does have various components that include the mission, vision, strategic goals, schools-based initiatives, and a theory of action, although these components are only partially congruent with the buildings’ plans.

### **Plan Implementation and Evaluation (Criteria 12-17)**

Beyond the mention of professional development in the district plans, no additional direction is provided on how this professional development is implemented. Furthermore, professional development is mostly done at the building level with no connection to the district and with little oversight from the district administration. As for budgeting (**Criterion 13**) related to professional development, some principals

reported having adequate funding for professional development (see **Finding 3.2**). Auditors were told by district administrators the budget planning for the district occurs outside of the change process (see **Finding 5.1**).

Names and positions were not assigned responsibility for developing and implementing action steps. Measurable outcomes are included in the strategic plan, although these outcomes have no metric measures and evaluation expectations were not included. The auditors found no methods for evaluating progress or evaluating the plan's implementation.

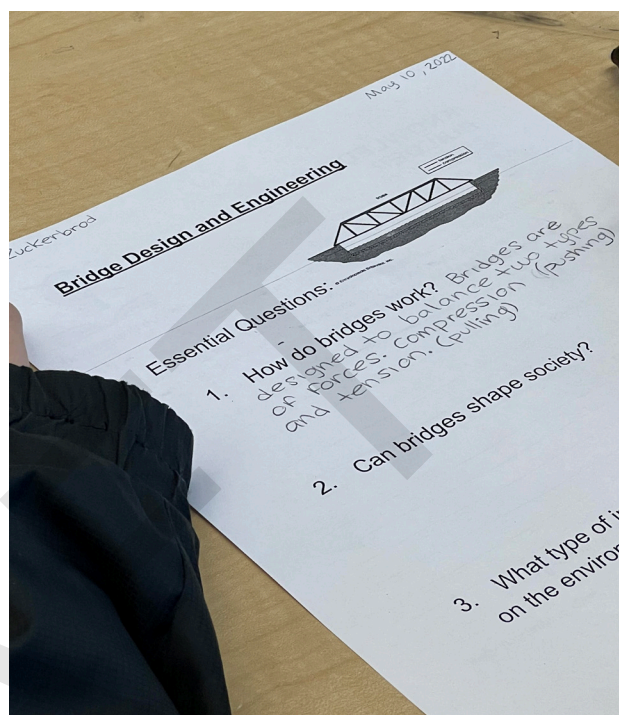
The strategic plan did not include approaches for monitoring or reporting on the implementation with results or action plans.

The strategic plan did not specify expectations or processes for all efforts or initiatives across the district to be congruent with the strategies, specific results, or action plans. Auditors did hear comments from administrators regarding the lack of congruency of the goals and mission: "District goals and mission need to be updated; these are not aligned to the work." (School Administrator). Auditors also reviewed various pieces from the district plan, but nothing was presented to the auditors that evidenced an adopted process. Certain certificated administrators have the responsibility for various departments, but linkage between departments and buildings has not been formalized. Coordination is extremely fragmented.

Auditors determined that district plans met 1 criterion and did not fully meet the other 16 criteria of the planning characteristics expected by the audit. Three criteria were partially met for the planning process; three criteria were partially met for quality and alignment; and three criteria were partially met for implementation and evaluation.

### School Improvement Plans

The auditors also reviewed the individual school improvement plans for each of the 22 schools in the district. School improvement planning for the SPS is guided by a standard planning template that includes district goals, district objectives and initiatives, district outcome measures, district action steps, Beginning of Year (BOY) outcome measures November, Middle of Year (MOY) outcome measures February, End of Year (EOY) outcome measures June, and professional development topics.



*Projects involving engineering are part of the specialized programming at Rippowam Middle School.*

### Exhibit 1.3.3: School Strategic Improvement Plans Presented to the Audit Team for Review

| Plan Name  | Date    |
|--|---------|
| KT Murphy Elementary Strategic Improvement Plan            | 2021-22 |
| Cloonan Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan           | 2021-22 |
| WestHill High School Strategic Improvement Plan            | 2021-22 |
| APPLES School Strategic School Improvement Plan            | 2020-21 |
| Davenport Ridge School Strategic Improvement Plan          | 2020-21 |
| KT Murphy School Strategic Improvement Plan                | 2020-21 |
| Newfield School Strategic Improvement Plan                 | 2020-21 |
| Northeast School Strategic Improvement Plan                | 2020-21 |
| Rogers International School Strategic Improvement Plan     | 2020-21 |
| Roxbury School Strategic Improvement Plan                  | 2020-21 |
| Springdale School Strategic Improvement Plan               | 2020-21 |
| Stark School Strategic Improvement Plan                    | 2020-21 |
| Stillmeadow School Strategic Improvement Plan              | 2020-21 |
| Strawberry Hill School Strategic Improvement Plan          | 2020-21 |
| Toquam Magnet School Strategic Improvement Plan            | 2020-21 |
| Westover School Strategic Improvement Plan                 | 2020-21 |
| Cloonan Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan           | 2020-21 |
| Dolan Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan             | 2020-21 |
| Rippowam Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan          | 2020-21 |
| Scofield Magnet Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan   | 2020-21 |
| Turn of River Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan     | 2020-21 |
| AITE School Strategic Improvement Plan                     | 2020-21 |
| ANCHOR at Harbor Landing School Strategic Improvement Plan | 2020-21 |
| Stamford High School Strategic Improvement Plan            | 2020-21 |
| Westhill High School Strategic Improvement Plan            | 2020-21 |

The auditors rated the school improvement plans against eight Curriculum Management Improvement Model criteria for planning and quality. The criteria and rating are presented in the following exhibit.

### Exhibit 1.3.4: Department and School Improvement Plan Quality Characteristics and Auditors' Rating

| Characteristics  | Auditors' Rating |
|--|------------------|
| <b>1. Congruence and connectivity:</b> Goals and actions are derived from, explicitly linked to, and congruent with the district plan's goals, objectives, and priorities.   | X                |
| <b>2. Reasonable and clear:</b> The plan is reasonable; it has a feasible number of goals and objectives for the resources available (finances, time, people). The goals and objectives of the plan are clear and measurable.  | P*               |
| <b>3. Emergent/Fluid:</b> The plan allows for emergent thinking, trends, and changes that impact the system both internally and externally.  |                  |
| <b>4. Change strategies:</b> The plan incorporates and focuses on those action strategies/interventions that are built around effective change strategies (e.g., capacity building of appropriate staff).  | P*               |
| <b>5. Deployment strategies:</b> The plan clearly delineates strategies to be used to support deploying the steps and tasks outlined in the plan (e.g., orientation to the change, staff development on the proficiencies needed to bring about the change, communication regarding planned change). |                  |



| Characteristics  | Auditors' Rating |
|--|------------------|
| <b>6. Integration of goals and actions:</b> All goals and actions in the plan are interrelated and congruent with one another.   | X                |
| <b>7. Evaluation plan and implementation:</b> There is a written plan to evaluate whether the objectives of the plan have been met (not to evaluate whether or not the activities have taken place). Evaluation components of plans are actions to be implemented; plans are evaluated for their effects or results and modified as needed. There is both frequent formative evaluation and summative evaluation, so that plans are revised as needed. |                  |
| <b>8. Monitoring:</b> Systems are in place and are being implemented for assessing the status of activities, analyzing the results, and reporting outcomes that take place as the plan is designed and implemented.  |                  |
| <b>Total Met</b>   | <b>2/8</b>       |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>  | <b>25%</b>       |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met   |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.   |                  |
| ©2021 CMSi   |                  |

Overall, the auditors found that the school improvement plans fully met two criteria and partially met two criteria for an adequacy rating of 25%. There are school improvement plans at each school in the district. The following provides more information on what the auditors found with respect to the characteristics.

The campus planning documents reviewed by the auditors were explicitly linked to the District SIP goals and objectives & initiatives.

The strategic plan references four goals, as described below:

- Goal #1 Promote Learning Organization that Supports Productive Habits of Mind, Body & Heart.
- Goal #2 Foster Productive Habits of Mind
- Goal #3 Foster Productive Habits of Body
- Goal #4 Foster Productive Habits of Heart

Two of the four goals areas are addressed in the district and school strategic improvement plans:

- Goal #2. Mind: English Language Arts/Reading
- Goal #2. Mind: Math
- Goal #4. Mind, Body & Heart: Social Emotional Learning
- Goal #4. Heart: Attendance and Engagement.

The objectives & initiatives are not expressed in measurable terms, and neither are the outcomes. Outcomes are vague and indistinct, given the challenges. The following are examples of vague outcomes in the plans:

- Goal #2 "Increase in percent...DIBELS reading assessments."
  - "Decrease in achievement gaps among student groups"
- Goal #2 "Increase in percent of students in grades 1-8 demonstrating growth on Math Inventory."
  - "Decrease in achievement gaps among student groups"

- Goal #4 “Each school will have SEL programs and supports in place for students.”
  - “Each school will provide ongoing professional development on SEL and/or Restorative Practices.”
- Goal #4 “Decrease the number of students chronically absent by grade and student groups.”

Although the district has been responsive to unexpected changes and demands, these steps are taken at the district level, with little evidence of such process at the building level. No directive in policy requires emergent or fluid planning at the building level.

Auditors looked for activities and strategies that implicitly or explicitly address the recognition that successful implementation of change requires deployment (i.e., anticipation for requirements, preparation, organization). Examples of deployment activity include those that help stakeholders recognize the need for change, such as teambuilding efforts, staff retreats, and professional development on the change process. The district and school plans include professional development, but there is no indication of who will be providing the training or implementing deployment.

Auditors determined that action steps linked appropriately to the respective objectives/initiatives would likely bring about positive change if implemented with fidelity. Building administrators expressed 97% agreement to the following: “I am well aware of the district’s goals and mission that drive the work of our district and individual schools.” Overall, within each section of each campus plan, there was connection to the overall goals.

Auditors found no written plan to evaluate goals on the building plans. The strategic plan makes mention of monitoring progress: “District leadership will review goals, objectives, initiatives, and action steps on an annual basis, assessing how successful strategies are in pursuit of a specific goal and adjusting as needed to ensure the greatest impact on student outcomes.” However, none of the strategies listed include measurable outcomes of completion or indicators of implementation.

The district and school improvement plans include outcome measures for the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. However, they are imprecise and do not provide formative information that will assist the district/schools in determining whether the strategy is leading schools to meet the objective.

The following are examples of outcome measures found in the improvement plans:

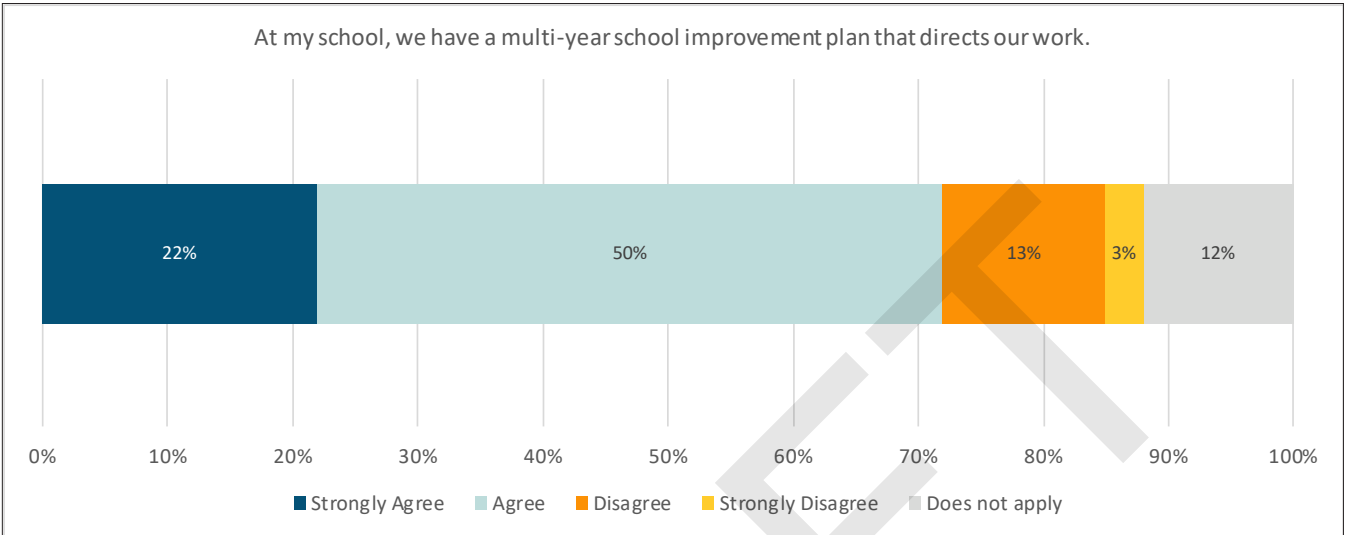
- Goal 2. “See summary of K-5...DIBELS BOY data [Here](#).”
- Goal 2. “See summary of students on-track to graduate [Here](#).”
- Goal 2. “See summary of 1-8 Math Inventory BOY data [Here](#).”
- Goal 4. “See summary of professional development sessions offered...”
- Goal 4. “See number of students identified as chronically absent as of...”

The auditors found little evidence in the improvement plans that a system is in place for monitoring implementation of the strategies or progress toward the desired outcomes. The topic of change strategies or monitoring of such strategies is rarely mentioned.

Auditors determined that the school improvement plans met two criteria and did not fully meet six criteria of the quality, design, deployment, and delivery characteristics of building planning. Two criteria were partially met, congruency and connectivity and integration of goals and actions. School improvement plans were determined to be inadequate.

The following exhibit presents the survey responses from 32 building administrators to the prompt, “At my school, we have a multi-year school improvement plan that directs our work.”

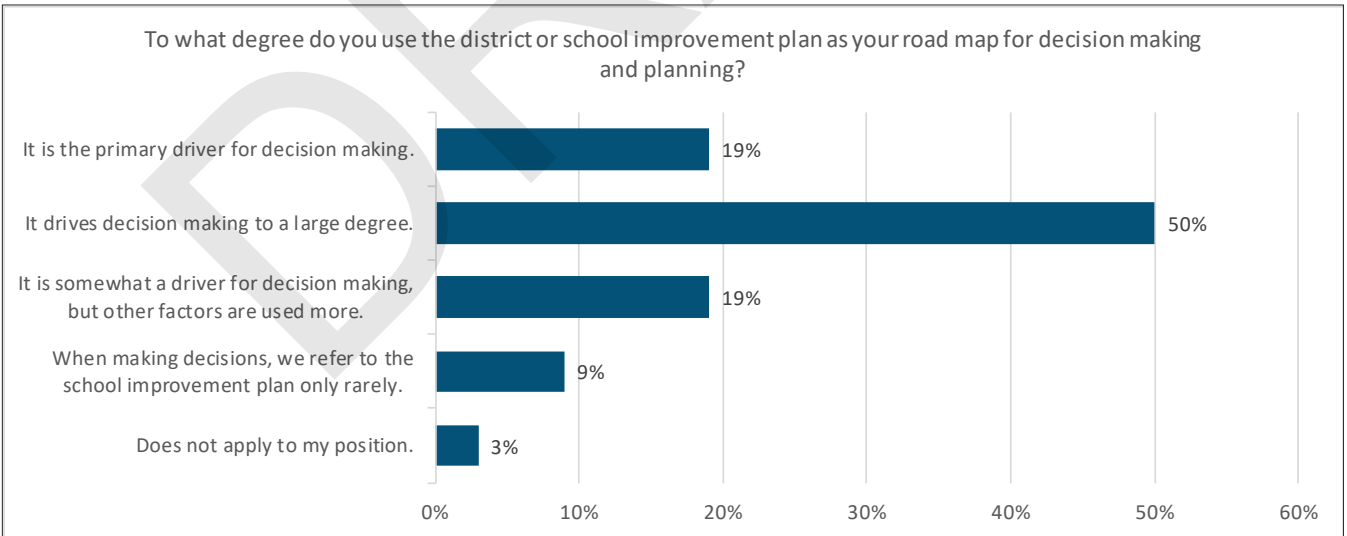
**Exhibit 1.3.5: School Administrator Responses: Existence of Improvement Plan**



The exhibit above shows that, overall, principals “strongly agree” or “agree” that they have a multi-year school improvement plan that directs their work. Only 16% of the building administrators stated that they “strongly disagree” or “disagree” with the statement.

The following exhibit presents the building administrators’ survey responses to the question, “To what degree do you use the district or school improvement plan as your road map for decision making and planning?”

**Exhibit 1.3.6: School Administrator Responses: Use of Improvement Plan**



The building administrators’ responses demonstrate the value of the improvement plans. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents stated that the school improvement plans are the primary drivers for decision making or that they drive their decision making, while 28% responded that the school improvement plans “somewhat” or “rarely” drive decision making.

These results suggest that administrators have developed and use the school improvement plans referenced in **Exhibit 1.3.3**. The following comments from building administrators were made during interviews about the district and school improvement planning development and use: “We get the goals from the district. We just develop our school goals based on it.” “The school improvement plan is authored by me. The district tells us our goals. I include additional things in the plan so that there is evidence of what we do.” “Before Covid, we had committees, we worked on the plan, developed it, and after Covid we got away from how we used to do it. This year when we came back, we got an email where they said, here are the district goals and see how you implement it.” “The SIP gets adjusted and updated every year, but previous goals are always considered and included if they are still relevant.”

## Summary

Auditors found that the Stamford Public Schools team is in the process of reviewing their 2017-2022 Strategic Plan and that the District Strategic Improvement Plan is updated yearly. The strategic plan impacts the development of both the district improvement plan and school improvement plans. Goals and objectives are tightly aligned. Each school creates an annual school improvement plan, although only three schools presented a current year improvement plan. All plans are based on the district’s goals and objectives and subsequently are to tailor the building action steps to the uniqueness of each individual building. However, they are treated almost like one document because they are so similar in content and form. A review of the plans indicated insufficient detail to guide daily decisions and actions at the building or district level. All of these initiatives are made despite a planning process that is not consistent across the district. Where planning does exist (departmental or building level), there is no requirement that planning be congruent across the district or even within a department (see **Recommendation 4**).

**Finding 1.4: The current Stamford Public Schools district technology plan meets audit criteria and is presently being updated. Instructional technology is available for teachers and students throughout the district, however, its use is not clearly linked to written curriculum and not utilized to transform instruction.**

Technology is the instructional tool that when integrated into written curriculum and into the delivery of instruction has the potential to enhance learning for every student and ensure that they are competitive with their peers throughout the world. Effective school districts use technology planning to enhance implementation so that deeper, more meaningful student learning results. Technology planning is key to providing direction for the selection, adoption, implementation, and evaluation of technology as an instructional tool.

Stamford Public Schools has a technology mission statement: “We believe that infusing technology into classroom instruction will create students who are academically competitive, technology literate, motivated and engaged in the learning process and prepared for the 21st century.” The technology vision is: “...use technology both inside and outside of the classroom for learning. Technology must be aligned with and support the teaching and learning needs of the district.” These statements from the 2015-2018 Technology Plan set the foundation for how instructional technology is viewed in Stamford Public Schools. The commitment to a 1:1 ratio of computers to students affirms the desire to incorporate technology use throughout the teaching and learning process.

Auditors reviewed plans and documents, visited classrooms, interviewed administrators, teachers, staff, and reviewed parent surveys. In examining the district technology plan, auditors found that the plan needs updating. The Technology Plan was approved by the board of education on June 22, 2015, and is dated 2015 to 2018. The plan states that it is the charge of the Technology Committee to monitor technology plans “on an ongoing basis.” The Technology Committee is also charged with “developing

each new 3-year Technology Plan.” (Stamford Public Schools Technology Plan 2015-2018, p. 2) Effective technology implementation starts with a thorough plan that is current and that includes the CMSi Criteria for Instructional Technology Programs. When the auditors visited the district, the technology plan was in the process of being reviewed and revised. There had been one meeting (March 4, 2022) of the technology committee assigned to review and update the existing plan. The minutes from the initial meeting highlighted the “State of Technology in Stamford Public Schools.” The challenges included providing professional development and maintaining the large number of technology devices in the district. The minutes also indicated that bringing in personal devices is problematic, as is supporting secure digital environments. The “State of Technology” also indicated that more than 50% of the computers are older than four years. The Technology Committee is creating subcommittees to address identified issues.

Auditors used the existing technology plan to determine its rating based on CMSi Criteria for Instructional Technology Programs. The following exhibit shows the auditors’ ratings based on the 15 criteria.

**Exhibit 1.4.1: CMSi Criteria for Instructional Technology Programs and Auditors’ Rating**

| Criteria   | Auditors’ Rating |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Board policy or administrative regulation for instructional technology exists.        | P*               |
| 2. There is a clear statement of program philosophy/vision.                              | X                |
| 3. A comprehensive view of technology exists.  | P*               |
| 4. A needs assessment has been completed and evaluated.                                  | X                |
| 5. Measurable student goals and objectives exist.  | X                |
| 6. An ongoing student assessment component exists.                                       | X                |
| 7. An ongoing program assessment component exists.                                       |                  |
| 8. There are comprehensive staff trainings related to existing standards and objectives. | X                |
| 9. Standards for hardware exist.   |                  |
| 10. Standards and guidelines for software/applications exist.                            | X                |
| 11. Internet access standards exist.   | X                |
| 12. The role of the school library/media center is stated.                               | X                |
| 13. A budget for program implementation/roll-out has been identified.                    | X                |
| 14. A budget for program maintenance has been identified.                                | X                |
| 15. Technology site plans are aligned with district plans.                               | X                |
| <b>Total Met</b>   | <b>11/15</b>     |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>  | <b>73%</b>       |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met   |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy. |                  |
| © 2021 CMSi  |                  |

Auditors found that 73% of the criteria (11 of 15) displayed in the exhibit above were met. The total criteria met is 12 out of 15. Two criteria were not met: #7. An ongoing program assessment component exists; and #9. Standards for hardware exist. The auditors did not find evidence that the district had included an ongoing program assessment component in the technology plan, nor were the auditors presented with documents that addressed a program assessment component. The auditors also did not find standards for hardware. The district has multiple platforms to support in addition to allowing students to use their own computers in some cases.

Auditors expect at least 70% of criteria for Instructional Technology programs to be met for adequacy. The Stamford Public Schools meets the minimum at 73%. Criteria were reviewed using the 2015-218 district technology plan, which is in the process of being updated.

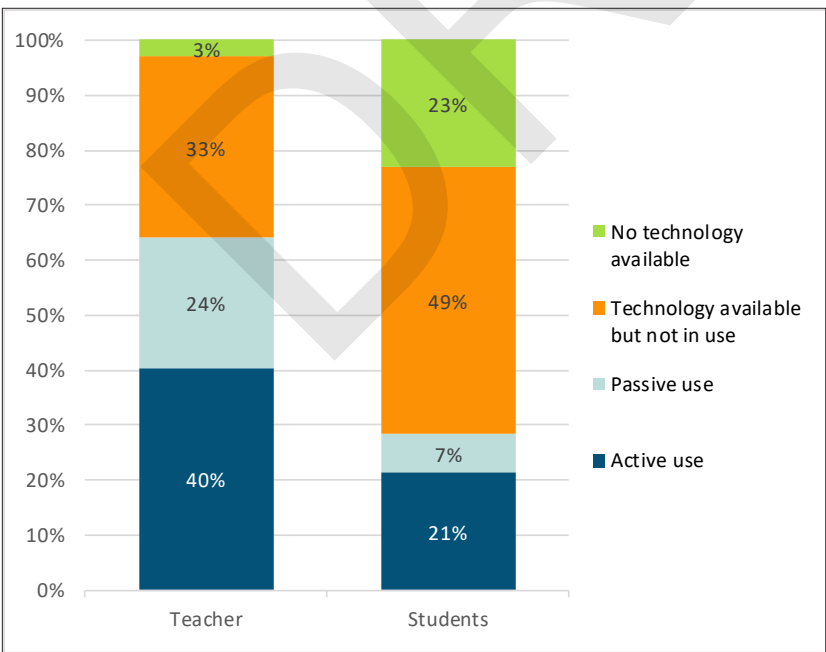
The Stamford Technology Plan 2015-2018 states, “Equal access to technology in every school and in every classroom is the first step for our students and staff in building a student-centered program which fosters collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking.”

Computer access for students and teachers is available in classrooms throughout Stamford Public Schools. District documents show that the ratio of computers to students is 1:1. Notes from the Reopening CORE Committee minutes states, “1:1 Technology Program: Our technology device shipments have arrived, and all students are now able to use either a district-issued Chromebook (K-8) or laptop (9-12) or a personal device that meets SPS technology specifications (BYOD).” (December 1, 2020)

The technology plan states that “equal access to technology in every school and in every classroom is the first step for our students and staff in building a student-centered program which fosters collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. We must ensure that access to technology is not only equitable throughout our schools, but we are providing equal opportunities to technology for students outside the classroom.” The attention to the equitable distribution of technology to ensure access by every student is a commitment to serving the needs of all students. This is a first and important level of commitment. The use of technology in the classrooms, by both teachers and students, determines the elevation of technology as an infused teaching and learning tool.

Auditors visited 307 classrooms throughout the district. They observed the use of technology in the classroom by both teachers and students. Teachers were actively using technology in 40% of the classrooms observed by auditors. The active use of technology included using interactive white boards and overhead projectors (Promethean Boards) to enhance the lesson being presented. Students, on the other hand, were using technology 21% of the time. Students were using Chromebooks and laptop computers. The following exhibit shows the percentage of Use of Technology by teachers and students during the time of the auditors’ classroom observations. The use of technology was categorized as active, passive, technology available but not in use, and no technology available.

**Exhibit 1.4.2: Use of Technology**



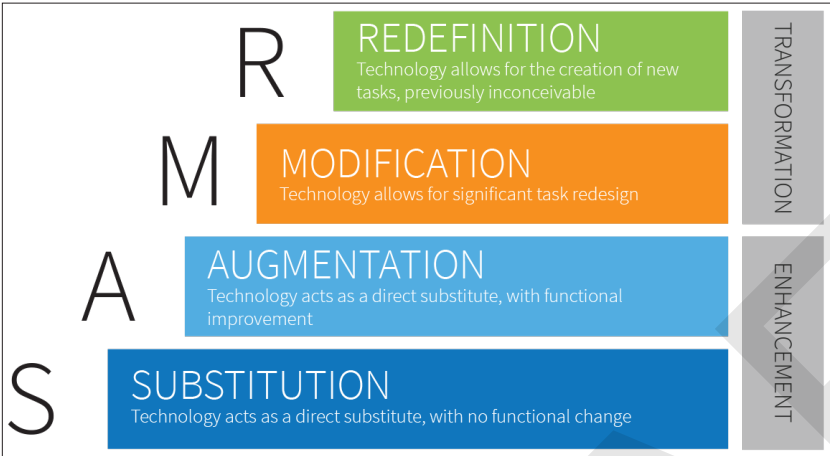
Principals were asked during the auditors’ classroom visits and interviews about computer availability. The response supported the district’s statement that the ratio of computers to students is 1:1. When computers were not visible in the classrooms, principals indicated that Chromebooks were on carts or in students’ desks. Locked computer carts were visible in some classrooms. The exhibit shows that while technology was available for teachers to use, it was not in use in 33% of the classrooms visited by the auditors. In two-thirds of the classrooms, teachers were either actively or passively using technology. It also shows that technology was

available for students to use but that it was not being used by students 49% of the time. In almost half of the classrooms, students were not observed using technology as an instructional tool.



CMSi uses SAMR in determining the levels of technology use for instructional enhancement and transformation. SAMR is an acronym for Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition. Substitution and Augmentation have the potential to enhance instructional delivery. Modification and Redefinition have the potential to transform the instructional delivery process. (<https://curriculumsolutions.net/blog/2020/05/31/the-pitfalls-of-virtual-learning>) The following exhibit provides a description of SAMR.

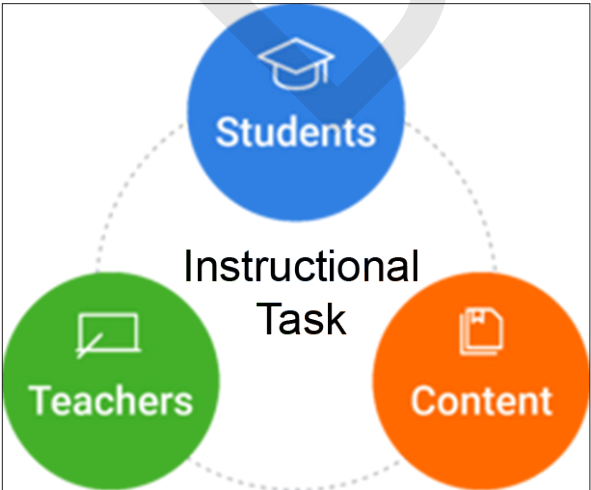
**Exhibit 1.4.3: SAMR Model**



Teachers in Stamford Public Schools were primarily using technology as a substitution in instructional delivery. Auditors define substitution as a direct tool substitute without modification. An example is using a note taking app to draft a document. Simply trading paper copies of materials for online copies doesn't necessarily represent an improvement. The question asked in substitution is, "What are we gaining by replacing this with

technology?" During classroom observations by auditors, teachers were using technology as substitution 87% of the time. Substitution is the bottom level of the technology/instructional delivery integration process. The enhancement of instruction is minimum. Richard Elmore says that "the relationship between (the Core), and not the qualities of any one element, determines the nature of instructional practice." He further states that "technology has the potential to affect the Core, and it can certainly seem cutting edge, but if the tech only substitutes for static resources, it can't really affect the Core. Students doing worksheets on iPad are still doing worksheets...The bottom line is, a district can have all the bells and whistles it wants (or conversely, be as spartan as a monastery), but it's irrelevant unless it affects the Core." The Core is the instructional process, it is the interaction between the teacher, student, and the content. The focus is on what students are doing in the instructional process; what is their instructional task. A diagram of the Core is represented in the following exhibit.

**Exhibit 1.4.4: The Core (Richard Elmore)**



Classroom observation data revealed that students in Stamford Public Schools were not using technology in 49% of the classrooms auditors visited. In the classrooms where technology was being used, 30% were using the technology as practice/workbooks on screens. Instructional effectiveness is enhanced and transformed when the components of substitution, augmentation, modification, and redefinition are observed and practiced as part of the instructional delivery process. When augmentation is practiced, an auditor would see that "the base materials are still a simple substitution, but the student's responses are augmented." The key question in augmentation is, "How does the technology affect the

student's productivity?" Augmentation is enhancement of instruction. Modification begins transforming the instruction. The key question is "Does the technology significantly alter the task?" The lesson is changed so that instructional tasks require the technology and is because of the technology. Redefinition occurs when "the technology fundamentally alters the task in a way that makes it a completely new experience that would not be possible without the technology." The question in Redefinition is, "Does this allow us to redefine task specifications in a way that would not be possible without the technology?"

Technology must be more than a textbook or worksheet. Instructional technology is successful when it is aligned with teaching and learning: "The success of our implementation of the district technology will be dependent on the alignment and prioritization of our technology goals with our teaching and learning goals." (District Technology Plan, 2015-2018) Students deserve to be challenged with instructional tasks that will transform their educational experiences to make them competitive learners. Their survival in our global society depends on this transformation in instructional practices.

Access to technology was stated as a strength of the district in the Spanish-speaking parents' survey. Responses to Question 10: My child uses technology in the classroom to complete activities and/or projects, indicated that technology is available and used. One parent stated, "They use a lot of technology; they need more reading with books, not only on computers."

Overall, the auditors found that Stamford Public Schools has a technology plan that needs updating. The district has formed a technology committee to update the existing plan. The committee has met once and is developing subcommittees to address identified issues. The auditors reviewed the existing plan against the CMSi criteria and found that the plan meets 11 of 15 audit criteria and is considered adequate. Auditors looked at the use of technology in 307 classrooms visited during the audit. Their classroom observations showed that in less than 25% of classrooms students were using technology. Auditors also found that technology is not linked to the written curriculum (see **Finding 2.3**), and that the integration and delivery of technology in instruction is at the lowest levels of SAMR, Substitution and Augmentation. While these levels may enhance the delivery of instruction, they may not be transformative (see **Recommendation 4**).

# FOCUS AREA TWO: The School District Has Established Clear and Valid Objectives for Students.

A school system meeting this audit focus area has established a clear, valid, and measurable set of pupil standards for learning and has set the objectives into a workable framework for their attainment.

Unless objectives are clear and measurable, there cannot be a cohesive effort to improve pupil achievement in the dimensions in which measurement occurs. The lack of clarity and focus denies to a school system’s educators the ability to concentrate scarce resources on priority targets. Instead, resources may be spread too thin and be ineffective in any direction. Objectives are, therefore, essential to attaining local quality control via the school board.

## What the Auditors Expected to Find in the Stamford Public Schools:

| Focus Area Two: Curriculum   | Common indicators  |
|--|--|
| Under Focus Area Two, auditors examine the scope, quality, and alignment of the educational program within the school system. An educational system meeting Focus Area Two demonstrates clearly established learner expectations and definitions of instructional content for effective teaching and learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A clearly established, system-wide set of goals and objectives that addresses all programs and courses and is adopted by the school board;</li><li>• Demonstration that the system is contextually responsive to national, state, and other expectations as evidenced in local initiatives;</li><li>• Evidence of comprehensive, detailed, short- and long-range curriculum management planning;</li><li>• Knowledge, local validation, and use of current best curricular practices;</li><li>• Written curriculum that addresses both current and future needs of students;</li><li>• Major programmatic initiatives designed to be cohesive;</li><li>• Provision of explicit direction for the superintendent and professional staff;</li><li>• A curriculum that is clearly explained to members of the teaching staff and building-level administrators and other supervisory personnel; and</li><li>• A framework that exists for systemic curricular change.</li></ul> |

## Overview of What the Auditors Found in the Stamford Public Schools:

This section is an overview of the findings that follow in the area of **Focus Area Two**. Details follow within separate findings.

While the district has a curriculum management plan in place, it is driven through policy and not regular practice. The existing plan does not meet minimum audit criteria for effective curriculum management plans and/or planning.

The SPS does not meet the expectation of a written curriculum for all courses taught in the district. For those courses where written curriculum does exist, few are of the quality to provide teachers throughout the district the needed direction on how and what to teach.

Auditors analyzed 1,606 student artifacts provided by building principals and district leaders for content, cognition, and context. Auditors found most artifacts on grade level, but many required lower-order thinking in the form of classroom context tasks for elementary work. Auditors found that more secondary tasks required higher-order thinking skills, but in the form of the less engaging classroom context.

**Finding 2.1:** The district has a curriculum management plan in place; the plan, however, is outdated, does not meet minimum audit criteria for effective curriculum management plans and/or planning, and is not utilized on a regular basis to clarify and delineate district and building/classroom level responsibilities.

A district with a strong focus on improving student learning has a comprehensive plan with guidelines and procedures that facilitate the design and delivery of curriculum. The plan directs the who, what, why, where, when, and how of curriculum development, review, and evaluation; and is the only plan that focuses on the most critical work of the district—teaching and learning. A written curriculum that is comprehensive, useful, and up-to-date serves as the foundation for a school system where growth in student learning is the norm. A planning process secured in policy institutionalizes district philosophy, ensuring that personnel changes will not affect the curriculum management system.

To determine the quality of curriculum management planning in Stamford Public Schools, auditors examined district documents, including board policies and job descriptions, and conducted surveys of stakeholders in the district. As indicated in **Finding 1.1**, auditors were presented with *Board Policy 6121*, which requires a curriculum cycle of systemic improvement and includes *A Plan for Curriculum Management, Design, and Delivery in Stamford Public Schools* as the guiding document regarding curriculum management planning. Job descriptions assign primary responsibility to the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, with support from and collaboration with the Directors of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment for Elementary (PK-5) and Secondary (6-12).

Auditors found a written plan to coordinate the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum. While some elements of the curriculum management plan meet individual audit criteria, the overall plan does not meet minimum audit criteria for effective curriculum management plans and/or planning. Additionally, both the policy that directs the district to have a curriculum management plan and the plan itself are outdated, with policy adopted in 2010 and the curriculum management plan dated 2009.

The curriculum management audit expects that all responsibilities for curriculum management are explicit, clarified, and monitored. Certain responsibilities should be tightly held at the school-wide or district level, while other curriculum delivery functions may be loosely held at the classroom level. The following exhibit illustrates this delineation. Such delineation is essential to balance the consistency and quality of student learning while supporting flexibility and autonomy at the school to meet the unique needs of each student. It is important to note that loosely-held components are still aligned with the tightly-held components and have parameters established through a vetting process that ensures alignment with the district goals, vision, and curriculum. When clarity is missing for such aspects of curriculum management, inconsistencies are likely across district classrooms.



*Hart Magnet letter files to build sight words*

### Exhibit 2.1.1: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Decision-Making Matrix

| Tightly-Held<br>(Non-negotiable)<br>District Level   | Loosely-Held<br>(Aligned to the Tightly-held but Negotiable by School)<br>School/Classroom Level   |
|--|--|
| Ends<br>(Curriculum and Aligned Assessments)   | Means<br>(Instruction and Programs)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision, Mission (district, program-specific)</li> <li>• Goals (district goals, program goals)</li> <li>• Philosophy, Beliefs about education (district)</li> <li>• Priorities (district, program)</li> <li>• Standards, objectives for students</li> <li>• Curriculum—Outcomes/Student Expectations/Objectives</li> <li>• Assessment—aligned to curriculum, criterion-based, benchmark, formative, and diagnostic (progress-monitoring, skill checks, performance-based)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiation of when students (individual and groups) get which standards/outcomes/student expectations/objectives</li> <li>• Processes, procedures</li> <li>• Instructional strategies</li> <li>• Resources, textbooks, etc.</li> <li>• Program implementation</li> <li>• Groupings</li> <li>• Staffing</li> <li>• Informal assessments for classroom purposes</li> </ul> |
| ©CMSi 2021   |  |

To rate the adequacy of the Stamford Public Schools approach to curriculum management planning, auditors compared the district's written direction found in *Policy 6121* and *A Plan for Curriculum Management, Design, and Delivery in Stamford Public Schools* to the Curriculum Management Improvement Model's (CMIM) 15 characteristics of a comprehensive curriculum management plan. These characteristics and the auditors' ratings of the district's documents are shown in the exhibit below. Because this exhibit examines the district's *directives* for curriculum planning rather than current district *practices*, the auditors' ratings are based on evidence that the district has established an official expectation in writing for each of the 15 characteristics, not on evidence that the characteristic is found in practice. To meet the audit expectation, the district's planning process must demonstrate 11 or more of the 15 characteristics, or 70%.

### Exhibit 2.1.2: Curriculum Management Planning Characteristics and Auditors' Assessment of District Approach

| Characteristics:   | Auditors' Rating |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Describes the vision and philosophy for instruction. Establishes a framework for the design of the curriculum, including such directives as standards-based, results-based, or competency-based; the alignment of the written, taught, and tested curriculum; and the approaches used in delivering the curriculum.                                     | X                |
| 2. Directs how state and national standards will be included in the curriculum. This includes whether or not to use a backloaded approach, in which the curriculum is derived from high-stakes tested learnings (topological and/or deep alignment), and/or a frontloaded approach, which derives the curriculum from national, state, or local learnings. | X                |
| 3. Defines the steps and stages/phases of the curriculum development process.  | X                |
| 4. Specifies the roles and responsibilities of the board, central office staff members, and school-based staff members in the design, development, and delivery of curriculum.   | P*               |
| 5. Presents the required format and components of all curriculum and assessment documents.   | P*               |



| Characteristics:  | Auditors' Rating |
|---|------------------|
| 6. Requires for every content area a focused set of precise (measurable) student objectives/ student expectations and standards that are reasonable in number so the student has adequate time to master the content.   | p*               |
| 7. Directs that curriculum documents not only specify the content of the student objectives/ expectations, but also define the contexts and cognitive types that must be included for mastery to be assured.  |                  |
| 8. Directs curriculum to be designed so that it supports teachers' differentiation of instructional approaches and selection of student objectives at the right level of difficulty. This ensures that those students who need prerequisite concepts, knowledge, and skills are kept on-level and moved ahead at an accelerated pace, and that students who have already mastered the objectives are also appropriately challenged. | p*               |
| 9. Identifies the timing, scope, and procedures for a periodic cycle of review of curriculum in all subject areas and at all grade levels.  | X                |
| 10. Specifies the overall beliefs and procedures governing the assessment of curriculum effectiveness. This includes curriculum-based diagnostic assessments and rubrics (as needed). Such assessments direct instructional decisions regarding student progress in mastering prerequisite concepts, skills, knowledge, and long-term mastery of the learning.  | X                |
| 11. Describes the procedures teachers and administrators will follow in using assessment data to strengthen written curriculum and instructional decision making.   | X                |
| 12. Outlines procedures for conducting formative and summative evaluations of programs and their corresponding curriculum content.  |                  |
| 13. Requires the design of a comprehensive staff development program linked to curriculum design and its delivery.  | X                |
| 14. Presents procedures for monitoring the delivery of curriculum.  | X                |
| 15. Establishes a communication plan for the process of curriculum design and delivery.   | p*               |
| <b>Total Met</b>  | <b>8/15</b>      |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>   | <b>53%</b>       |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met  |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.  |                  |
| ©2021 CMSi  |                  |

Eight of 15 characteristics met audit requirements for a rating of 53%, which is below the expectation of 70%; five characteristics partially met audit standards but are counted as not met when determining percentage of adequacy; and two characteristics were rated as not met.

While meeting some expectations either partially or fully, the curriculum plan as described in policy is rarely used as written, if at all, according to comments to auditors from district personnel. The lack of consistency in utilizing the plan has negative ramifications for other aspects of the curriculum and assessment program (see **Findings 2.2, 2.3, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3**).

Policy and the curriculum management plan describe the vision and philosophy for instruction, direct the use of state and national standards, and define the steps and stages of the curriculum development process, along with procedures and timing for a periodic cycle of review. The documents also specify the beliefs and procedures regarding assessment of curriculum effectiveness, include procedures for the use of assessment data for decision making, require a comprehensive staff development program linked to the curriculum, and include procedures for monitoring the delivery of curriculum (Characteristics 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14).

Some characteristics of curriculum management planning were rated by the auditors as partially met, meaning the plan/planning meets certain aspects of the characteristic, but not fully. The following narrative explains the auditors' ratings in relationship to those characteristics. Roles related to curriculum design, development, and delivery are outlined in *A Plan for Curriculum Management, Design, and Delivery in Stamford Public Schools* with specific responsibilities present in job descriptions for central office and campus personnel. The board, although included in the Stakeholder Engagement chart, is required only to "advise and inform," general terms also used for students and families, but not required to adopt all curriculum (Characteristic 4). Auditors found that required components of curriculum and assessment documents are outlined in the curriculum management plan; however, the directors of the content areas provide an "appropriate format," indicating that subject area formats may differ, leading to inconsistency between subject areas and grade levels (Characteristic 5). The curriculum management plan requires each curricular area to create a scope and sequence that includes clear expectations; the plan does not, however, require a focused set of measurable objectives or a reasonable number of objectives for a given period (Characteristic 6). Auditors found reference to "clear recommendations for differentiation and intervention" and the inclusion of special education and English as a Second Language educators on curriculum committees. However, no guidance regarding instructional approaches, selection of student objectives, or pacing for differentiation purposes was found (Characteristic 8). Communication related to discontinuation of former curriculum and parent brochures communicating curriculum changes to parents are mentioned in the curriculum management plan. However, a communication plan for the process of curriculum design and delivery was not presented to auditors (Characteristic 15).

Auditors rated two characteristics of curriculum management planning as not met, indicating no aspect of the characteristic was found. Neither board policy nor the curriculum management plan directs the inclusion of contexts and cognitive types of student activities and/or assessment items, ensuring mastery of the content objectives (Characteristic 7). Auditors also found that the curriculum management plan outlines general procedures for evaluation of the curriculum; however, no mention of procedures for formative and summative evaluation of programs and their corresponding curriculum content was noted (Characteristic 12).

Confusion is created when responsibilities at the campus and district levels are not clarified and delineated, as described in **Exhibit 2.1.1**. This reality is evidenced by comments made by building administrators:

- "We should be uniform in our curriculum at each school."
- [We need a consistent] "curricular format for all subject areas K-12, which incorporates standards, goals and objectives, instructional resources, assessment, differentiation."
- "I believe an overhaul of the district curriculums [is needed] to follow a singular framework for development that includes differentiation strategies, formative and summative assessment, and a lesson plan repository for teachers to share and build internal capacity."

## Summary

Auditors found that the Stamford Public Schools has an out-of-date curriculum management plan with missing or incomplete components. Because plan usage is inconsistent, even those characteristics deemed adequate by audit expectations are of limited value on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, the current policy and plan do not assure the necessary guidance for the development of a quality, comprehensive, written curriculum to guide teaching and learning (see **Recommendation 2**).

**Finding 2.2: District-wide written curriculum is sparse in Stamford Public Schools. Most curriculum is either developed at the building level, a result of individual teacher efforts, or acquired by teachers from online resources and colleagues. Auditors determined the scope of the written curriculum to be inadequate to guide instruction at all levels and in both cor and non-core courses.**

A comprehensive, well-written, and articulated curriculum promotes continuity in the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and concepts vertically and horizontally. Written curriculum documents for all courses at all grade levels provide teachers with the necessary guidance to ensure that rigorous, quality instruction is provided to all students. A comprehensive system of curriculum guidance aligns the written, taught, and tested curriculum logically.

Comprehensive curriculum documents contain objectives for student learning, prerequisite skills to be acquired prior to the current objective, instructional resources, classroom strategies, successful approaches to key concepts and skills, and assessment methods tied to each objective or cluster of objectives.

Ensuring that every student has access to quality education cannot be left to chance. It must be carefully planned and executed. Without curriculum guidance, variance in instructional content is inevitable. Without direction, teachers rely on other materials, resources, and instructional content that may or may not align with district goals and assessment requirements.

The scope of the curriculum is defined as the number of curriculum guidance documents compared to the number of classes offered. The resulting percentage is the scope of the written curriculum. The audit expects that all classes have a corresponding written curriculum document. To be considered adequate, 100% of core classes (ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies) must have a curriculum document guiding instruction. Non-core courses (e.g., health, world language, technology, etc.) must have a 70% coverage rate to be considered adequate.

To ascertain the scope of the written curriculum in the Stamford Public Schools, the auditors studied all available documentation. A list of those documents and areas searched that are pertinent to this finding is provided in the following exhibit.

**Exhibit 2.2.1: Documents Reviewed by Auditors to Determine Scope**

| Document  | Date    |
|---|---------|
| Stamford Public Schools Public Website  | No Date |
| Each School Public Website  | No Date |
| Each Department Public Website  | No Date |
| Program of Studies for Stamford high schools  | 2021-22 |
| Middle School Reference Guide   | 2017-18 |
| Curriculum documents provided by the district on a shared drive   | Various |
| International Baccalaureate Program Website ( <a href="https://www.ibo.org/">https://www.ibo.org/</a> ) | No Date |

As evidenced by the documents provided to the auditors by the district, there is some confusion regarding what constitutes a curriculum guidance document. The auditors were provided copies of teacher manuals, unit plans, and lists of topics as curriculum guides in some content areas. For example, some math documents were copies of the *Every Day Math* program from the Teacher's Edition. Preferred science curriculum documents were copies of another teacher's manual. These were not credited as curriculum guidance documents.

As determined by the auditors, the scope of curriculum documents in the Stamford Public Schools is outlined in the following sections by grade level: high school, middle school, and elementary school.

### **High School**

The scope at the high school level at Stamford Public Schools is 20% overall and is inadequate to guide instruction. A comprehensive chart depicting the scope of the written curriculum for high school is provided in **Appendix F**.

As can be seen in the exhibit provided in **Appendix F**, of 536 courses offered to students, 257 are core classes (ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies); and 279 are non-core classes (i.e., art, music, business, etc.). Fifty-four core content curriculum guides were found: 15 in mathematics, 10 in English language arts, 13 in science, and 16 in social studies.

The scope of written curriculum documents in the core content areas is 21%. Fifty-four curriculum guidance documents (19%) were available in the non-core content area.

The overall scope at the high school level at Stamford Public schools is 20% and is inadequate to guide instruction.

While nine curriculum documents were found in the area of engineering, all these documents appear to be from Project Lead the Way and are not Stamford Public Schools documents. Therefore, the district was not given credit for these documents in determining scope.

Health and physical education documents in the shared drive from the district are copies of the Connecticut standards and did not receive credit in the scope calculations. Additionally, the music curriculum guidance documents are from another Connecticut school district; therefore, Stamford Public Schools received no credit for these documents in scope determination.

### **High School Scope Summary**

The audit expectation is that 100% of the core content classes (ELA, math, science, and social studies) will have corresponding curriculum documents. With 54 courses, out of a possible 257, having curriculum guidance documents provided to the auditors, the percentage of coverage is 21%. This is inadequate to guide instruction in high school core content areas. Additionally, in the non-core content areas, the audit expectation is that 70% of all classes will have a corresponding curriculum document. In the Stamford Public Schools, 54 non-core courses, of a possible 279, had written curriculum guidance documents. This 19% coverage is inadequate to provide sufficient guidance for teaching and learning. Overall, 20% of the courses in SPS high schools have a provided district written curriculum.

### **Middle School**

The scope of written curriculum documents at the middle school level is 15% or 14 documents of a possible 95.

The auditors completed the same process and calculations at the middle school level as the high school level. The middle schools listed on the district's public website are Cloonan, Dolan, Rippowam, Scofield Magnet, and Turn of River. In addition, there are middle school programs in the Anchor Program and at the Rogers International School.

The scope of the written curriculum at the middle school level is displayed below.

**Exhibit 2.2.2: Scope of Curriculum Documents in Grades 6-8**

| Course   | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------------|-------------|
|  | Present            | Not Present |
| <b>Core Courses</b>                                  |                    |             |
| <b>English Language Arts</b>                         |                    |             |
| College Prep ELA 6                                   |                    | X           |
| CP ELA 7   |                    | X           |
| CP ELA 8   |                    | X           |
| Honors ELA 6   |                    | X           |
| Honors ELA 7   |                    | X           |
| Honors ELA 8   |                    | X           |
| ESL 6  |                    | X           |
| ESL 7  |                    | X           |
| ESL 8  |                    | X           |
| Reading 6  |                    | X           |
| Reading 7  |                    | X           |
| Reading 8  |                    | X           |
| LA 6   | X                  |             |
| LA 7   | X                  |             |
| LA 8   | X                  |             |
| Extended Research Project with SS – gr. 8            |                    | X           |
| EL Success 6   |                    | X           |
| EL Success 7   |                    | X           |
| EL Success 8   |                    | X           |
| IB Lang. and Lit. 6                                  |                    | X           |
| IB Lang. and Lit. 7                                  |                    | X           |
| IB Lang. and Lit 8                                   |                    | X           |
| <b>Total English Language Arts</b>                   |                    | <b>3/22</b> |
| <b>Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum</b> |                    | <b>14%</b>  |
| <b>Mathematics</b>                                   |                    |             |
| CP Math 6  | X                  |             |
| CP Math 7  | X                  |             |
| CP Math 8  | X                  |             |
| Honors Math 6  |                    | X           |
| Honors Math 7  |                    | X           |
| Honors Math 8  |                    | X           |
| Math 6   |                    | X           |
| Math 7   |                    | X           |
| Math 8   |                    | X           |
| Algebra 1 7 & 8                                      | X                  |             |
| Geometry 8   | X                  |             |
| IB Math 6  |                    | X           |
| IB Math 7  |                    | X           |
| IB Math 8  |                    | X           |
| <b>Total Mathematics</b>                             |                    | <b>5/14</b> |
| <b>Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum</b> |                    | <b>36%</b>  |



| Course   | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------------|-------------|
|  | Present            | Not Present |
| Science  |                    |             |
| CP Science 6   | X                  |             |
| CP Science 7   | X                  |             |
| CP Science 8   | X                  |             |
| Honors Science 6   |                    | X           |
| Honors Science 7   |                    | X           |
| Honors Science 8   |                    | X           |
| IB Science 6   |                    | X           |
| IB Science 7   |                    | X           |
| IB Science 8   |                    | X           |
| Total Science  | 3/9                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum              | 33%                |             |
| Social Studies   |                    |             |
| CP SS 6  | X                  |             |
| CP SS 7  | X                  |             |
| CP SS 8  | X                  |             |
| Honors SS 6  |                    | X           |
| Honors SS 7  |                    | X           |
| Honors SS 8  |                    | X           |
| IB Indiv. and Soc. 6                                       |                    | X           |
| IB Indiv. and Soc. 7                                       |                    | X           |
| IB Indiv. and Soc. 8                                       |                    | X           |
| Total Social Studies                                       | 3/9                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum              | 33%                |             |
| Total Core Areas   | 14/54              |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum - Core Areas | 26%                |             |
| Non-Core   |                    |             |
| World Language   |                    |             |
| Spanish 6  |                    | X           |
| Spanish 7  |                    | X           |
| Spanish 8  |                    | X           |
| Mandarin 6   |                    | X           |
| Mandarin 7   |                    | X           |
| Mandarin 8   |                    | X           |
| Total World Language                                       | 0/6                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum              | 0%                 |             |
| Music  |                    |             |
| Band 6   |                    | X           |
| Band 7   |                    | X           |
| Band 8   |                    | X           |
| Chorus 6   |                    | X           |
| Chorus 7   |                    | X           |
| Chorus 8   |                    | X           |
| Music 6  |                    | X           |
| Music 7  |                    | X           |
| Music 8  |                    | X           |

| Course  | Written Curriculum |             |
|---|--------------------|-------------|
|   | Present            | Not Present |
| Strings 6   |                    | X           |
| Strings 7   |                    | X           |
| Strings 8   |                    | X           |
| Percussion  |                    | X           |
| Total Music   | 0/13               |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum   | 0%                 |             |
| Art   |                    |             |
| Art 6   | X                  |             |
| Art 7   | X                  |             |
| Art 8   | X                  |             |
| IB Design 6   |                    | X           |
| IB Design 7   |                    | X           |
| IB Design 8   |                    | X           |
| IB Arts 6   |                    | X           |
| IB Arts 7   |                    | X           |
| IB Arts 8   |                    | X           |
| Total Art   | 3/9                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum   | 33%                |             |
| Health and Wellness   |                    |             |
| Physical Education 6  |                    | X           |
| PE 7  |                    | X           |
| PE 8  |                    | X           |
| IB Physical Education and Health 6  |                    | X           |
| IB P. E. and Health 7   |                    | X           |
| IB P. E. and Health 8   |                    | X           |
| Total Health and Wellness   | 0/6                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum   | 0%                 |             |
| AVID, Technology, Life Skills, Resource, and Library  |                    |             |
| AVID  |                    | X           |
| Technology 6  |                    | X           |
| Technology 7  |                    | X           |
| Technology 8  |                    | X           |
| Life Skills 6   |                    | X           |
| Life Skills 7   |                    | X           |
| Life Skills 8   |                    | X           |
| Total AVID, Technology, Life Skills, Resource, and Library  | 0/7                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum   | 0%                 |             |
| Total Non-Core Courses  | 3/41               |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum - Non-Core  | 7%                 |             |
| Total Core and Non-Core Courses   | 17/95              |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum - Core and Non-Core   | 18%                |             |
| Key: IB = International Baccalaureate   |                    |             |
| Rogers is a K-8 International Baccalaureate School and appears in both middle and elementary school documents..                                       |                    |             |
| Sources: Middle School Reference Guide, Master Schedules, Stamford Public Schools Public Websites, IB website, and shared documents from the district |                    |             |

Of the 54 core content classes provided to students, 14 curriculum guidance documents were available to the auditors in the core content areas at the middle school level. Three guides were available in English language arts, five documents in mathematics, three science documents, and three social studies documents were provided in the district shared drive. It is the audit expectation that all core curriculum courses have a corresponding curriculum guidance document. The calculated scope of curriculum documents in the core content courses at the middle school level is 26%.

In the non-core content areas at the middle school, 41 classes were available to students. The auditors were provided with three curriculum guidance documents. The calculated scope of available written curriculum is 7%. It is the audit expectation that 70% of non-core content classes have a corresponding curriculum guidance document.

Overall, 95 classes are offered at the middle school level. Of those 95, 17 had corresponding curriculum guidance documents for an overall scope of 18%.

From the documents provided, auditors were unable to determine the middle school program of studies at Rogers International School. No written curriculum was in evidence. Likewise, at the Anchor Program, auditors were unable to determine the program of study from the documents provided.

Five qualifying documents were available in the content area of mathematics. Three of those mathematics documents are school-specific: two Algebra I documents, one for Scofield Magnet Middle School, and one for five middle schools (Rippowam, Cloonan, Dolan, Turn of River, and Rogers). One Geometry document was found for Rogers, Rippowam, Cloonan, Dolan, and Turn of River. As the Scofield Algebra I document is school-specific and not a district-wide curriculum guide, the auditors did not include that in the calculation of scope. One Geometry document was found for Rogers, Rippowam, Cloonan, Dolan, and Turn of River.

Documents were found for mathematics in grades 6, 7, and 8. The district's primary curriculum guides, called Handbooks, are dated 2017-2018. Other documents for these courses had other dates. As the bulk of the content appears in the Handbooks, those are the dates used by the auditors.

Science and social studies documents were provided to the auditors for grades 6, 7, and 8. The district was credited for those documents.

One document in the non-core content area, entitled Dolan Middle School AVID Course Syllabus, was found. It is school-specific, not a district-wide curriculum guidance document. Therefore, it was not credited in determining district-wide scope. Three Visual Arts documents were made available to the auditors. Music documents provided by the district were copied from another Connecticut district; therefore, Stamford Public Schools was not given credit for these documents. Additionally, a local curriculum was provided for the three middle school grade levels in the area of visual arts. The district was credited for these documents.

### **Middle School Scope Summary**

It is the audit's expectation that all (100%) core content classes have curriculum guidance documents and 70% of non-core content courses have corresponding curriculum documents to adequately guide instruction. The scope at the middle school level is considered inadequate to guide instruction in both core and non-core content areas, with a core content scope of 26% and a non-core content scope of 7%. An overall scope of written curriculum documents at the middle school level was 18%, inadequate to guide district instruction.

## Elementary Schools

The scope for the elementary written curriculum, overall, is 21% and is considered inadequate to guide instruction.

The exhibit below shows the scope of curriculum at the elementary level for the Stamford Public Schools.

### Exhibit 2.2.3: Scope of the Curriculum Documents in Grades K-5

| Courses Offered   | Course by Grade Level |   |   |   |   |   | Courses<br>Requiring<br>a Written<br>Curriculum | Courses<br>with a<br>Written<br>Curriculum |
|---|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
|   | K                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |   |  |
| Core Content Areas  |                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| English Language Arts Reading   |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| English Language Arts Writing   |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| English Language Arts Oral Language   |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| Mathematics   | X                     | X | X | X | X | X | 6   | 6  |
| Social Studies  | X                     | X | X | X | X | X | 6   | 6  |
| Science   | X                     |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 1  |
| Total (Core Content Areas)  | 3                     | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 36  | 13   |
| Total Scope of Core Content Areas   |                       |   |   |   |   |   |   | 36%  |
| Non-Core Content Areas  |                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Art   | X                     | X | X | X | X | X | 6   | 6  |
| Dance   |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| Music   |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| Problem Solving   |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| Technology  |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| Drama   |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| Physical Education  |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| Health  |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| English Learners  |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 6   | 0  |
| Total (Non-Core Content Areas)  | 1                     | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 54  | 6  |
| Total Scope of Non-Core Content Areas   |                       |   |   |   |   |   |   | 11%  |
| Total Scope of the Elementary Schools Written Curriculum                              |                       |   |   |   |   |   | 90  | 21%  |
| Sources: Stamford Public Schools public website, shared documents, and the IB website |                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |

A total of 19 qualifying district-wide curriculum documents in the elementary core content areas were available to auditors. Overall, the scope of the written elementary curriculum 21%, or 19 out of a possible 90.

In the core content area, 13 documents were provided to auditors. It is the expectation of the audit that 100% of the core content classes have corresponding curriculum documents. At the elementary, 36 core content classes are provided to students. The scope of the core classes at the elementary level is 36%, or 13 out of a possible 36.

Six qualifying curriculum guidance documents were available to the auditors in the area of elementary non-core content courses. 54 non-core content classes were offered at the elementary level. The scope of the non-core content area at this level is 11%, or 6 out of a possible 54.

Twenty additional curriculum documents were available on the district's public website. These documents were school-specific and were not included in the district-wide scope calculation. Were these 20 documents included in the scope results, the entire scope for the elementary level would be 50%, inadequate to effectively guide instruction.

Adequate coverage requires that all 36 core content areas have guides. The scope of core content curriculum documents at the elementary level is 36%, or 13 of a possible 36.

Six documents were found in the non-core areas at the elementary level. The scope of the written curriculum in the non-core areas is 11%.

The scope for the elementary written curriculum, overall, is 21% and is considered inadequate to guide instruction.

Twenty school-specific documents were found on the public website. If those documents were included in the scope calculations, the entire scope for the elementary level would be 50%. Thus, the scope would be considered inadequate to guide instruction at the elementary level even with the inclusion of these documents.

One elementary school is an International Baccalaureate school (Rogers). However, no curriculum documents were presented to the auditors for that program at the elementary level.

Curriculum documents were found in the public area of the Stamford Public School website at the elementary school level. Documents dated 2017 were found at Springdale Elementary School in the areas of reading, writing, and oral language in grades K-5. Also, curriculum documents dated 2008 were found at Hart Magnet Elementary School in the content areas of science and social studies for grades 3 and 5. A science curriculum document from Hart Magnet Elementary school, also dated 2008, was found for grade 3 science. The documents from Hart Magnet Elementary School are outdated, and as they were also school-specific, they were not included in the scope calculation. The documents from Springdale were not included in the scope calculation as these documents also appear to be school-specific. From these documents, the auditors inferred that each school may have created its own curriculum documents at one time. A document outlining an English language arts curriculum at the prekindergarten/kindergarten level was found by the auditors. Dated 2017, this document states in the footer that it is from the Connecticut State Department of Education; therefore, the auditors did not credit the district for this material. Also, a few English language arts units for grades 1 and 4 were presented to the auditors; as these were not complete for a school year, no credit was received.

A science document for kindergarten was also available and given credit in the scope calculations, the auditors determined this to be a district-wide curriculum document. The remainder of the elementary science documents presented were copies of teacher's editions and received no credit.

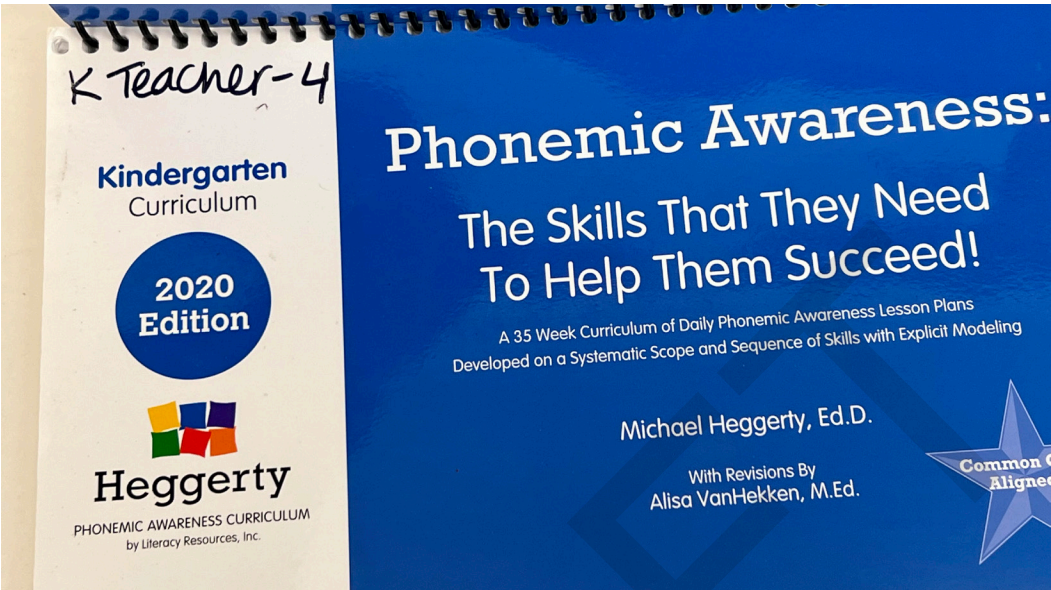
Elementary mathematics documents were presented to the auditors. These consisted of pacing guides for grades K-5. The district was credited for these documents in the scope.

Social studies documents for the elementary level were presented to the auditors. In addition, material from a Michigan school district was copied, with a Stamford pacing guide and scope and sequence attached to the document. The district was credited for these documents in the scope calculation.

The music curriculum was from another school district in Connecticut and received no credit in the auditors' scope calculation. The health and physical education curriculum documents were copies of the Connecticut State Standards and thus received no credit. Visual arts documents were provided to



the auditors. The district was credited for these documents. The English learner curriculum consisted primarily of empty or inaccessible folders. No credit was given in this area.



*Purchased instructional programs are used throughout the district in place of a formalized and tightly-held written curriculum.*

Rogers International School, grades K-8, is an International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. According to the IB website, a written curriculum is required for each subject taught. However, no evidence of a written curriculum for these classes was provided to the auditors.

Additionally, the magnet schools in the district have some different programming other than that found in the traditional elementary schools. Auditors were unable to determine what additional programming was offered from the documents provided.

**Elementary Scope Summary**

With an overall scope of 21%, the elementary schools’ scope calculation is inadequate to guide instruction in core or non-core content classes. Some confusion as to what constitutes a written curriculum is evident. A teachers’ guide for a resource or a copy of state or national standards does not constitute a local written curriculum document.

**Summary of K-12 Curriculum Documents**

The following provides a summary of the K-12 curriculum scope for each grade level.

**Exhibit 2.2.4: Summary of the Scope of Curriculum Documents K-12**

| Grade                     | Number of Courses Offered | Written Curriculum | Scope of the Written Curriculum in the Core Content Areas |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---|
| High School               | 536                       | 108                | 20%   |
| Middle School             | 95                        | 17                 | 18%   |
| Elementary School         | 90                        | 19                 | 21%   |
| Total (All Content Areas) | 721                       | 144                | 20%   |

Twenty percent of courses taught K-12 have a written curriculum that was made available to the auditors.

All three grade levels, high school, middle school, and elementary school were relatively commensurate in coverage of content by written curriculum.

All grade levels, and the district as a whole, do not have adequate written curriculum documents to support and guide instruction.

When Stamford Public Schools teachers were surveyed on what they predominantly used to direct their instruction, over 80% of respondents indicated that they develop their own instructional materials, often using online resources and suggestions from colleagues, in lieu of a district curriculum.

The need for district-wide coordination in the development and adoption of the curriculum is also evidenced by a sampling of comments from the district-wide survey of teachers:

- “The curriculum for certain subjects is nowhere to be found. There are absolutely no resources provided.”
- “The district does not have a curriculum for literacy.”
- “The curriculum that was put together was basically free resources found on the web and put together in a very poor manner.”
- “There is no curriculum for the Reading/AE class.”
- “My department has no curriculum.”
- “I do not have a curriculum, and no one guided me on what to teach in my classroom.”
- “We do not have a math curriculum currently. It’s all on us.”

This theme continues in the interviews of administrators and teachers throughout Stamford Public Schools.

- “There is no articulation between what’s written, what’s taught, and what is assessed.” (Teacher)
- “[There is a] lack of mutual agreement about what the word curriculum means.” (Teacher)
- “We do have a five-year curriculum [review] cycle but it is not followed.” (District Administrator)
- “We have no district curriculum for any elective classes.” (Teacher)
- “There is next to no alignment between schools in curriculum content.” (Teacher)
- “There is a lot of confusion about programs versus written curriculum. We have a scope and sequence, but that is all we have.” (Building Administrator)

## Summary

Qualifying curriculum documents are locally-developed, district-wide, detailed instructional guidance documents. There is confusion regarding what constitutes a curriculum guide. For example, the district staff provided a list of topics, unit plans, or teacher editions to the auditors as curriculum guidance documents. Some schools appear to be independently creating their own curriculum documents. Some documents are outdated. Overall, the scope of the written curriculum in the Stamford Public Schools is inadequate to guide instruction and guarantee a rigorous, equitable, comprehensive, aligned educational experience for all students (see **Recommendation 2**).

**Finding 2.3: Overall, the quality of available curriculum guidance documents in the Stamford Public Schools is inadequate to guide teaching and learning.**

Not only must curriculum guidance documents be available to teachers to direct teaching and learning in alignment with the district goals and vision, but the documents must be of sufficient quality to provide all teachers with the necessary information to direct their work. With quality written curriculum documents, teachers' efforts are coordinated and focused. Provided a quality curriculum guide, teachers can more efficiently deliver high-quality instruction instead of spending time searching for content and resources.

Quality curriculum documents contain clear, valid, measurable objectives directly corresponding to formative and summative assessments, in content, context, and cognition. Priority standards are tied to summative assessments, while formative assessments guide daily teaching. These documents outline prerequisite skills and knowledge necessary for the attainment of the new learnings. Adopted, approved texts and supplementary instructional materials are delineated.

Furthermore, quality curriculum documents provide suggestions for an overall approach to teaching the content area or a particular objective or group of objectives. Suggested activities and assignments are provided. Provisions for differentiated instruction and differentiated activities are included. These components are somewhat flexible, allowing teachers the leeway necessary to meet the needs of individual students.

The auditors reviewed all documents provided by the district in the shared drive and searched the public website for all curriculum guidance documents. Any documents deemed by auditors as district-wide curriculum guidance documents were included in the quality analysis, with the exception of school-specific documents, outdated documents, and those that did not qualify. For example, non-qualifying documents included those from another district or copies of teacher editions, as noted in **Finding 2.2**. Using the rubric in **Exhibit 2.3.1**, auditors examined each document available for the components necessary to provide teachers with the required specificity for quality instructional delivery.

**Exhibit 2.3.1: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Frame One Analysis: Minimal Basic Components for Curriculum Document Quality and Specificity**

| Criterion Descriptors   | Value |
|---|-------|
| <b>Criterion One: Clarity and validity of standards</b>   |       |
| No standards present.   | 0     |
| Vague delineation of standards.   | 1     |
| Specifically states tasks to be performed or skills/concepts to be learned.   | 2     |
| States for each instructional objective the what, when (sequence within course/grade), how actual standard is performed, and the amount of time to be spent learning (requires rewrite or refining of the original language of the standard). The number of instructional objectives is feasible for the time allotted. | 3     |
| <b>Criterion Two: Congruence of the curriculum to the testing and evaluation program</b>  |       |
| No assessment approach.   | 0     |
| Some approach of student assessment stated.   | 1     |
| States some specific skills, knowledge, concepts that will be assessed at some point (not all objectives are addressed).  | 2     |
| Each instructional objective or cluster of objectives has a corresponding formative assessment, and priority or essential standards/objectives have a summative assessment, with rubrics/evaluation scales provided if required (as with performance-based assessment).   | 3     |

| Criterion Descriptors  | Value |
|--|-------|
| <b>Criterion Three: Delineation by grade of the essential skills, knowledge, and attitudes (may be a scope and sequence, but score is related to specificity in the objectives or standards described/ noted)</b>                                |       |
| No mention of required skill.  | 0     |
| States general knowledge students should have acquired from some prior grades/courses.   | 1     |
| States prior general experience/standards needed for the intended grade level standards (may not note when it was acquired, but does specify what prior knowledge/skills are needed).  | 2     |
| States specific, documented prerequisite or description of discrete skills/concepts required prior to this course (specificity in the objective wording is required, such as a “3” for Criterion One).   | 3     |
| <b>Criterion Four: Delineation of the major instructional tools in the form of [multiple] textbooks and supplementary materials</b>  |       |
| No mention of instructional resources.   | 0     |
| Names instructional resources for some instructional objectives (less than 50%).   | 1     |
| Names instructional resources for most instructional objectives (more than 50% but less than 100%).  | 2     |
| States for each instructional objective or cluster* of objectives the “match” between the basic resources and instructional objectives (100%).   | 3     |
| <b>Criterion Five: Suggested strategies and approaches for classroom use (teacher strategies and modeling)</b>   |       |
| No approaches cited for classroom use.   | 0     |
| Overall, vague statements on how to approach the content in the classroom (address less than half of the content objectives).  | 1     |
| Provides general suggestions for approaches; gives general suggestions for at least half of the learner objectives.  | 2     |
| Provides specific examples, by instructional objective or cluster* of objectives, on how to teach, model, or engage students with key concepts/skills in the classroom.  | 3     |
| <b>Criterion Six: Suggested student work/activities for classroom use</b>  |       |
| No inclusion of suggestions for student [practice] activities, projects, or work.  | 0     |
| Suggests student practice activities or assignments for some instructional objectives (less than half); activities may be the same for all students or allow for differentiation.  | 1     |
| Suggests some student practice activities or assignments (same or differentiated) for most instructional objectives (more than half, but not all).   | 2     |
| Suggests for all instructional objectives in the guide, by objective or cluster* of objectives, student practice activities, assignments, or projects that can be differentiated for content, process, and product.                              | 3     |
| <b>Total</b>   |       |
| * In the case of assessments, instructional tools and resources, and suggested strategies and approaches, these may be clusters. For example, one suggested approach may, in fact, address multiple objectives, such as a cluster of objectives. |       |
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The first three criteria are critical and should be tightly-held by the district (see **Exhibit 2.1.1**). In addition to defining what students should learn, they address the sequence (vertical articulation) and determine whether the students have mastered the content. The last three criteria are loosely held by the district, allowing teachers the flexibility to meet individual students’ needs. Teachers need the flexibility to use the resources, approaches, and strategies that best fit the learners in their classrooms, as driven by collected data.

Each curriculum document provided to the auditors was rated 0 to 3 on each of these six criteria. A total score for each document was obtained by adding the score for each criterion. The highest score a document can receive is 18 points. A curriculum guide is considered adequate to guide instruction if it has an overall score of 14 or greater.

### Ratings of the Minimal Basic Components and Specificity of the High School Curriculum Guides

The auditors calculated the quality rating by grade level and content area: high school core, high school non-core, middle school core, middle school non-core, elementary core, and elementary non-core. The following exhibit presents the guide rating for high school core classes. The subsequent exhibit addresses the high school non-core classes.

**Exhibit 2.3.2: High School Core Content Curriculum Quality Ratings**

| Curriculum Document Title                           | Grade | Date | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4   | 5      | 6    | Total Rating |
|---|-------|------|------|-------|------|-----|--------|------|--------------|
|   |       |      | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res | Strat. | Act. |              |
| IB Environmental Science Systems and Societies SL1  | HS    | 2017 | 3    | 3     | 3    | 2   | 3      | 3    | 17           |
| IB Environmental Science Systems and Societies SL2  | HS    | 2017 | 3    | 3     | 3    | 2   | 3      | 3    | 17           |
| Algebra I   | 9     | 2017 | 2    | 3     | 2    | 3   | 3      | 3    | 16           |
| IB Chemistry HL1                                    | HS    | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 16           |
| IB Chemistry HL2                                    | HS    | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 16           |
| IB Chemistry SL1                                    | HS    | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 16           |
| IB Chemistry SL2                                    | HS    | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 16           |
| Civics  | 10    | 2015 | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| Geometry  | 10    | 2018 | 2    | 3     | 2    | 3   | 2      | 3    | 15           |
| Honors Geometry                                     | 10    | 2018 | 2    | 3     | 2    | 3   | 2      | 3    | 15           |
| IB Biology HL 1                                     | HS    | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| IB Biology HL 2                                     | HS    | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| IB Biology SL 1                                     | HS    | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| IB Biology SL 2                                     | HS    | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| IB Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation SL1 | HS    | 2021 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| IB Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation SL2 | HS    | 2021 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| Modern World History                                | 10    | 2015 | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| U.S. History  | 11    | 2015 | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 3      | 3    | 15           |
| AP Psychology                                       | Unk.  | 2016 | 2    | 2     | 1    | 3   | 3      | 3    | 14           |
| English Language Arts Handbook                      | 9     | Unk  | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 2      | 3    | 14           |
| English Language Arts Handbook                      | 10    | Unk  | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 2      | 3    | 14           |
| English Language Arts Handbook                      | 11    | Unk  | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 2      | 3    | 14           |
| English Language Arts Handbook                      | 12    | Unk  | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 2      | 3    | 14           |
| IB History HL1                                      | HS    | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 14           |
| IB History HL2                                      | HS    | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 14           |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches HL1         | HS    | 2019 | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 14           |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches HL2         | HS    | 2019 | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 14           |



| Curriculum Document Title                                    | Grade | Date  | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4   | 5      | 6    | Total Rating |
|--|-------|-------|------|-------|------|-----|--------|------|--------------|
|  |       |       | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res | Strat. | Act. |              |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches SL1                  | HS    | 2019  | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 14           |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches SL2                  | HS    | 2019  | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 3    | 14           |
| IB Physics SL1   | HS    | 2016  | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Physics SL2   | HS    | 2016  | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Psychology HL1  | HS    | 2017  | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Psychology HL2  | HS    | 2017  | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Psychology SL1  | HS    | 2017  | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Psychology SL2  | HS    | 2017  | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Research Foundations                                      | HS    | 2022  | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 1                                     | HS    | 2022  | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 2                                     | HS    | 2022  | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 3                                     | HS    | 2022  | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| Introduction to Psychology                                   | Unk.  | 2015  | 2    | 2     | 1    | 3   | 3      | 3    | 14           |
| Social Studies 9   | 9     | 2018  | 2    | 2     | 1    | 3   | 3      | 3    | 14           |
| Honors Pre-Calculus  | 11    | 17-18 | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 2      | 2    | 13           |
| IB Lang. and Lit. HL1  | HS    | 2021  | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 13           |
| IB Lang. and Lit. HL2  | HS    | 2021  | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 13           |
| IB Lang. and Lit. SL2  | HS    | 2021  | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 13           |
| International Baccalaureate (IB) Language and Literature SL1 | HS    | 2021  | 2    | 3     | 2    | 1   | 3      | 2    | 13           |
| Bridges  | Unk.  | 2017  | 2    | 3     | 0    | 3   | 2      | 2    | 12           |
| English as a Second Language                                 | NA    | 2013  | 2    | 2     | 2    | 2   | 2      | 2    | 12           |
| English as a Second Language A-1                             | NA    | 2015  | 2    | 2     | 2    | 2   | 2      | 2    | 12           |
| Algebra 2  | 11    | 19-20 | 3    | 1     | 0    | 3   | 0      | 2    | 9            |
| Chemistry/ Sheltered Chemistry                               | Unk.  | Unk.  | 2    | 2     | 0    | 2   | 1      | 2    | 9            |
| CP Pre-Calculus  | 11    | 19-20 | 3    | 1     | 0    | 3   | 0      | 2    | 9            |
| Integrated Math 1  | Unk.  | Unk   | 2    | 0     | 0    | 2   | 2      | 3    | 9            |
| Integrated Math 2  | Unk.  | Unk   | 2    | 0     | 0    | 2   | 2      | 3    | 9            |
| Mean by Criterion  |       |       | 2.4  | 2.7   | 1.7  | 1.8 | 2.6    | 2.6  | 14           |
| Key: NA = not applicable, HS = high school, Unk. = unknown   |       |       |      |       |      |     |        |      |              |

Fifty-four documents in the core content areas were provided by the district for review. Overall, 39 documents were rated adequate to guide instruction. Fifteen documents were rated inadequate to guide instruction.

The English learner documents and documents for International Baccalaureate Language and Literature, Integrated Math, Pre-Calculus, Algebra II, and Chemistry do not contain the specificity required to adequately guide instruction.

The strongest areas in the district curriculum documents were assessments, suggested strategies, and suggested activities. The weakest areas were in the delineation of prerequisites and provision of resources.

**Criterion One:** The English language arts curriculum guides were divided into units; reading, writing, and speaking/listening objectives were delineated for each unit. These objectives correlate directly to

the listed Connecticut Core State Standards. The standards were translated into essential questions. Focus areas were highlighted. Necessary vocabulary is listed. A pacing chart with suggested timing and sequence of the listed units is provided. The components of this criterion were well developed and earned a rating of 3 in each of the four provided documents. In the English learner guides, the objectives were less well developed and not directly linked to assessments, materials, and strategies. In addition, English Language Arts A-1 appears incomplete. Units 6 through 10 need additional information.

The International Baccalaureate guides provided to the auditors encompassed all English language arts classes at the high school level. Each document alluded to companion material that would provide additional guidance to teachers.

Variance in mathematics documents was evident in the analysis of this criterion. Some guides earned a 3 rating, being comprehensive and meeting each necessary component, while other guides earned a 2, presenting objectives in a general way for the class. For example, in Integrated Math I, there is no sequence or time frame suggested for mastery of objectives. This sequence is a necessary component to earn a 3 rating in Criterion One. On the other hand, the Pre-Calculus curriculum guide provides for each cluster of objectives, a sequence, performance standards, the number of days to be spent on the cluster of objectives, and a feasible number of objectives for the amount of allotted time.

While more documents were found in the area of mathematics than in English language arts, the quality of the documents varied more in mathematics than in English language arts. Some documents were embedded in other documents. For example, honors geometry was not a separate document from the geometry curriculum guide but a part of the geometry curriculum or an extension of the primary document. The district was credited with having a curriculum document in both areas. The mathematics curriculum information provided by the district in the shared drive contained quite a bit of information for teaching in general and the teaching of mathematics. It included detailed assessment information and many resources for teaching in that subject area. The International Baccalaureate (IB) mathematics classes were encompassed in one document. This primary document references other information available to the teachers of IB mathematics, but no other documents were provided to the auditors.

In the area of social studies, each curriculum guide earned a rating of 2 or 3. For those documents receiving a 2, more specificity in the objectives is required. The three guides that earned a 3 rating used the National Council of Social Studies Standards, which were divided into Unit Focus Questions and Content Objectives. Approximate teaching time for each unit is specified, and performance tasks were provided with scoring rubrics.

SPS science curriculum guidance documents all earned a 2 or 3 for this criterion. Additional documentation from the IB program, supplemented with local information may have resulted in a higher rating for the IB science documents, as the documents provided were an overview of all classes in each category. In the local chemistry class and the IB Physics class, further specificity is required to earn a rating of 3. For example, linking each objective to assessments, activities, and strategies would result in a stronger document.

**Criterion Two:** In the English language arts curriculum guides for grades 9 through 12, each unit provided a cluster of objectives and formative and summative assessments. Also, copies of the district assessments were embedded into the curriculum document, along with scoring directions. Each guide earned a rating of 3 for this criterion. In the English language learner curriculum, the assessments were not quantified, providing no standard for mastery for each objective.

In the area of mathematics, those documents earning a rating of 3 provided formative and summative assessments for each cluster of objectives outlined in each unit. For those guides receiving a lower rating, more specificity is required to earn a 3 rating.

In social studies, assessments were paired with each set of objectives. The assessments are provided in the unit guides. Rubrics for scoring were also provided in those documents earning a rating of 3.

In the science content area, criterion two, Assessments, and criterion six, Suggested Activities, were the highest rated by the auditors.

**Criterion Three:** The auditors did not find a necessary delineation of prerequisite skills or the knowledge necessary to be successful in mastering the new objectives listed in these documents. A rating of 0 was earned for this criterion in each document in the English language arts curriculum. However, in the English Language Learners' curriculum documents, test scores from standardized measures are directly linked to class entrance.

Again, variability in the mathematics documents was in evidence. No prerequisite knowledge was mentioned in the majority of mathematics documents. However, in the geometry document, needed algebra skills are mentioned for some objectives.

In the area of social studies, no prerequisite classes or necessary knowledge were noted in the local curriculum documents. However, in the course description in the Program of Studies, World History is described as a sequel to Social Studies 9. This statement is insufficient to earn a score in the Prerequisite criterion. The IB curriculum documents provided statements regarding prior knowledge necessary to be successful in the area of study.

In the science documents presented by the district in the shared drive, no prerequisite was noted in the local document for Chemistry. In the IB documents, some prerequisite knowledge or experience was noted in the Physics and Biology narratives, and detailed information was provided in the remainder of the IB documents.

**Criterion Four:** A list of reading, writing, and oral language activities is provided for each unit where appropriate. Suggested approaches and specific teacher directions are included in each unit. Each guide earned a rating of 3 in this area of analysis. Some instructional resources were provided in the English learner documents, and linkages to the objectives were vague.

Many resources were provided for mathematics instruction in a folder entitled Directory for High School Mathematics. Many entries addressed assessments and the scoring of assessments. Syllabi, pacing guides, and curriculum documents were listed. In the high school mathematics curriculum guides, variable ratings were obtained. For example, in the Algebra II syllabus, each objective is matched with the corresponding text section, or the teacher is directed to a teacher-made resource. In the Integrated Math 2 documents, no instructional resources are listed. Also, in the IB documents, resources are not provided or are alluded to vaguely. In the IB documents, resources were not provided. Resources may be in additional IB documentation or local documents.

In the social studies curriculum guides, many of the necessary readings are included in the local documents. For example, in the U.S. History Curriculum Guide, the Declaration of Independence is provided. Excerpts of speeches and other focus materials are readily available to teachers. Each is paired with a cluster of objectives and essential vocabulary for the unit. In the IB documents, additional documents are referenced to provide resources and additional information; however, those documents were not available to auditors on the district shared drive.

Science was the weakest area for this criterion overall. In the IB documents, resources appear to be delineated in material not provided to the auditors.

**Criterion Five:** In the English language arts documents, each unit provided a list of suggested resources, both core text and some supplemental materials that could be used to assist student mastery of each objective or cluster of objectives. This specific information earned each guide a rating of 3 in this area. However, in the English learner guides, strategies for teaching were vague and not present for each objective, thus earning a 2 rating for this criterion.

In mathematics, general suggestions for an approach to various clusters of objectives were provided in most documents; in the directory, general approaches were provided. The suggestions lacked the specificity required to earn a 3 rating. Specific examples of teaching strategies were not coupled with objectives. However, in the Algebra I Pacing Guide, specific directions are provided for the teacher for almost all objectives, earning that guide a rating of 3 for this criterion. In the IB documents, approaches for teaching and developing mathematical knowledge were discussed at length, earning that guide a 3 for this criterion.

In social studies, each local document contains several suggested activities paired to each unit, where a cluster of objectives is delineated. Each unit brings the teacher through Initial Understanding to Making Connections and to Critical Stance, asking the teacher to lead the student to a deeper understanding and critical thinking.

In the science documents, this was the weakest area overall. In the IB documents, resources appear to be delineated in material not provided to the auditors.

**Criterion Six:** In the English language arts curriculum guides, each unit contained a list of suggested activities for each area of concentration. Each of these activities could be used as provided or differentiated for specific learners. Each guide earned a rating of 3 for this criterion. By comparison, general activities were provided in the English learner guides.

This was an area of relative strength for many of the curriculum documents presented in the area of mathematics instruction at the high school level, with an overall rating of 2.7. As an example of documents that received higher ratings, Integrated Math I and II provided specific student work and various activities for each cluster of objectives. As an example of a document that received a lower rating in this criterion, the Bridges document provides suggestions for activities, but they are not specifically tied to any objectives.

For each unit of instruction, paired with a cluster of objectives, the local social studies curriculum guides offered several student activities, assignments, and/or projects.

In the science curriculum, activities for the objectives or cluster of objectives were provided in each document. In the local curriculum document, more specificity and additional activities tied to each objective are necessary to earn a rating of 3.

### **Summary of Auditors' Quality Ratings for the High School Core Content Curriculum Documents**

To be considered adequate to guide instruction, curriculum guidance documents must earn a rating of 14 or better, using the Curriculum Management Minimal Basic Components for Curriculum Document Quality and Specificity rubric. Fifty-four documents were provided to the auditors in the core content areas. The majority (39) of the documents were considered adequate to guide instruction. Others came very close to adequacy, earning overall scores of 12 and 13. The social studies and science documents were strong with the exception of the local Chemistry curriculum guide. Language arts and mathematics earned more variable ratings.

## High School Non-Core Curriculum Documents

Some areas of study provided documents that did not qualify as curriculum guidance documents, such as teacher editions, copies of state and/or national standards, and copies of other districts' curriculum. For example, the Health and Physical Education Department provided copies of the Connecticut State Standards, without extrapolation to daily instructional guidance. Those documents were not included in the quality analysis. Fifty-four qualifying curriculum documents of a possible 279 curriculum documents were submitted. The auditors' quality and specificity ratings for the high school non-core class content is provided in the following exhibit.

**Exhibit 2.3.3: High School Non-Core Content Curriculum Quality Ratings**

| Curriculum Document Title             | Grade Level | Date | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4    | 5      | 6    | Total Rating |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|--------------|
|                                       |             |      | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res. | Strat. | Act. |              |
| IB Business Management HL 1           | HS          | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 3    | 16           |
| IB Business Management HL 2           | HS          | 2016 | 3    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 3    | 16           |
| IB Visual Arts SL 1                   | HS          | 2017 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Visual Arts SL 2                   | HS          | 2017 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Visual Arts HL 1                   | HS          | 2017 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Visual Arts HL 2                   | HS          | 2017 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Spanish 1                          | HS          | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Spanish SL 1                       | HS          | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Spanish SL 2                       | HS          | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Spanish HL 1                       | HS          | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Spanish HL 2                       | HS          | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Spanish ab initio SL1              | HS          | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| IB Spanish ab initio SL2              | HS          | 2020 | 2    | 3     | 3    | 1    | 3      | 2    | 14           |
| Technology Skills in the 21st Century | HS          | Unk. | 2    | 0     | 3    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 13           |
| Accounting 1                          | HS          | 2011 | 2    | 1     | 0    | 1    | 1      | 2    | 7            |
| Game Design                           | HS          | Unk. | 2    | 2     | 0    | 1    | 0      | 2    | 7            |
| AP Art History                        | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| AP Art and Design                     | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Studio Art                            | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Ceramics 1                            | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Ceramics 2                            | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Potter's Wheel 1                      | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Jewelry and Metalsmithing 1           | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Jewelry and Metalsmithing 2           | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Computer Graphic Art and Design       | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Adobe Photoshop                       | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Adobe Illustrator                     | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Color and Design                      | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Drawing and Painting 1                | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Drawing and Painting 2                | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Crafts 1                              | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Photography 1                         | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Photography 2                         | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |
| Sculpture 1                           | HS          | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 2    | 5            |



| Curriculum Document Title      | Grade Level | Date | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4    | 5      | 6    | Total Rating |
|--------------------------------|-------------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|--------------|
|                                |             |      | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res. | Strat. | Act. |              |
| Accounting 2                   | HS          | 2011 | 2    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 1      | 1    | 5            |
| Spanish Native Language Arts 1 | HS          | Unk. | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 3    | 5            |
| Marketing in the 21st Century  | HS          | Unk. | 2    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| French 1                       | 9-10        | 2012 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| French 2                       | 9-10        | 2012 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| French 3                       | 10-11       | 2012 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| French 4                       | 10-12       | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| French Honors 2                | 11-12       | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| French Honors 3                | 11-12       | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| French Honors 4                | 11-12       | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| French Honors 5                | 11-12       | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Spanish 1                      | 9           | 2013 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Spanish 2                      | 10          | 2013 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Spanish 3                      | 11          | 2013 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Spanish 4                      | 11-12       | 2013 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Spanish 5                      | 11-12       | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Spanish Honors 2               | 10          | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Spanish Honors 3               | 11          | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Spanish Honors 4               | 11-12       | 2015 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Italian 1                      | 9           | 2015 | 1    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 1    | 2            |
| Mean by Criterion              |             |      | 1.4  | 1.4   | 0.8  | 0.3  | 1.1    | 2    | 7            |

Fifty-four qualifying curriculum documents out of a possible 279 were provided to the auditors in the high school non-core content area. To be considered minimally adequate, documents must earn a rating of 14 points out of a possible 18. Thirteen of the 54 documents were rated as adequate to guide instruction (24%). The international Baccalaureate documents were considered adequate to guide instruction. None of the district created documents rose to the adequate rating in the non-core area. The average quality rating of all non-core curriculum documents is a 7, out of a possible 18.

**Criterion One:** A listing of student knowledge was provided for each standard in each class in the local curriculum. The listing does not specifically state what students should know or be able to do. For example, one entry states, “Discuss how current and past events influence the making of visual art.” Statements such as these do not quantify the end result of instruction. It is not measurable or connected to assessments and does not exactly state what knowledge students are to master. However, in the IB curriculum documents, the connection to assessments is more specific.

The local curriculum did not state the what, when, how, or amount of time needed to master each objective. For example, in the Accounting 2 document, in lieu of a measurable objective this partial statement is provided: “Describe and explain the conceptual framework of accounting principles and assumptions.” This statement is accompanied by an essential question. Neither essential questions nor partial objective statements rise to the level of specificity required to guide instruction.

**Criterion Two:** Connections between assessment and objective should be clear and specific. In the local curriculum, assessment is referenced vaguely, such as “tests and quizzes.” On the other hand, the IB curriculum provides rubrics and scoring guidance linked to the stated objectives.

What I KNOW about SPACE

Space has planets  
Earth, Pluto was the  
last major planet  
There is no oxygen  
Jupiter is the largest  
No growing life  
Pluto is no longer a  
planet  
There are satellites  
Pluto is now considered  
a dwarf planet  
Pluto has a red  
ice  
It is a star  
2 planets  
Saturn  
Mercury  
US  
Mars  
Mars has 2 moons  
ice and has deserts and  
windy, and very hot  
The sun is in the  
center of the solar  
system  
Mercury is the same  
size as Earth's moon  
Venus spins very slow  
size as Earth but  
Earth is the opposite  
like planet with  
Mars has 2 moons  
ice and has deserts and  
windy, and very hot  
The sun is in the  
center of the solar  
system

What I WANT to know about SPACE

Why is Pluto not  
considered a planet  
Gravitational force  
Are there stars other  
than our galaxy  
How do we know life  
is actually there  
Can people live  
in space  
How are other  
planets different  
from Earth  
What does the  
edge of the universe  
look like  
What are galaxies  
like  
How are Saturn  
and Jupiter different  
from our planet  
How do stars look  
like in real life  
What do stars look  
like in space  
How are planets  
formed?

What I LEARNED about SPACE

Saturn rings  
out of rocks  
Jupiter is the  
largest planet  
Pluto is the fastest  
planet on its side  
Different sizes for  
planets  
They all orbit the  
sun  
The sun is in the  
center of the solar  
system  
Mercury is the same  
size as Earth's moon  
Venus spins very slow  
size as Earth but  
Earth is the opposite  
like planet with  
Mars has 2 moons  
ice and has deserts and  
windy, and very hot  
The sun is in the  
center of the solar  
system

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**Exhibit 2.3.4: Rating of Minimal Basic Components and Specificity of Middle School Core Content Curriculum Guides**

| Curriculum Document Title | Grade Level | Date    | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4    | 5      | 6    | Total  |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|--------|
|                           |             |         | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res. | Strat. | Act. | Rating |
| English Language Arts     | 6           | 2019    | 2    | 2     | 2    | 3    | 3      | 3    | 15     |
| ELA                       | 7           | 2019    | 2    | 2     | 2    | 3    | 3      | 3    | 15     |
| ELA                       | 8           | 2019    | 2    | 2     | 2    | 3    | 3      | 3    | 15     |
| Social Studies            | 6           | 2020    | 2    | 3     | 1    | 2    | 3      | 3    | 14     |
| Social Studies            | 7           | 2020    | 2    | 3     | 1    | 2    | 3      | 3    | 14     |
| Social Studies            | 8           | 2020    | 2    | 3     | 1    | 2    | 3      | 3    | 14     |
| Geometry                  | 8           | 2017-18 | 2    | 2     | 0    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 12     |
| Science                   | 8           | 2018    | 2    | 2     | 0    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 12     |
| Algebra I                 | 7-8         | 2017-18 | 2    | 2     | 0    | 3    | 1      | 3    | 11     |
| Math                      | 6           | 2017-18 | 3    | 3     | 0    | 3    | 1      | 0    | 10     |
| Math                      | 7           | 2017-18 | 2    | 1     | 0    | 3    | 1      | 3    | 10     |
| Science                   | 7           | 2018    | 2    | 2     | 0    | 2    | 2      | 2    | 10     |
| Math                      | 8           | 2017-18 | 3    | 1     | 0    | 3    | 1      | 1    | 9      |
| Science                   | 6           | 2017    | 2    | 2     | 0    | 2    | 1      | 2    | 9      |
| Mean by Criterion         |             |         | 2.1  | 2.1   | 0.6  | 2.6  | 2.1    | 2.5  | 12     |

Six documents (43%) are rated as adequate to guide teaching and learning in the core content areas at the middle school level. Fourteen documents did not rise to the minimum audit expectation of a rating of 14 or above out of a possible 18. With overall ratings of 15 and 14, respectively, the English language arts and the social studies curriculum documents are considered adequate to guide instruction. Criterion Four, Resources, and Criterion Six, Suggested Activities, are the strongest areas of development with mean scores of 2.6 and 2.5, respectively. The weakest area is Criterion Three, Delineation of Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills, with a cumulative score of 0.6.

**Criterion One:** Both the English language arts and social studies documents were relatively strong throughout. However, the use of essential questions rather than fully developed objectives delineating a measurable outcome would have resulted in higher ratings in both areas of study.

Some math guides earned a 3 rating, being comprehensive and meeting each necessary component, while others earned a 2. For example, in the Math 7 guide, the objectives are written clearly, translated into Essential Questions and Learning Targets. In addition, the sequence of learnings and a suggested number of days for the cluster of objectives are provided. The missing piece is a specific statement about how each standard is performed. In the Math 6 Handbook, suggested formative and summative assessments are available for each cluster of objectives, providing teachers with specific guidance.

The science documents were also relatively strong in this criterion area, each earning a rating of 2. Most of the objectives in the middle school science documents lacked the specificity to earn a rating of 3. For example, “Identify and use content vocabulary appropriately” is not sufficiently detailed. It does not provide information about how the objective is to be measured or what constitutes mastery.

**Criterion Two:** The English language arts, social studies, and science documents were relatively strong in this area, particularly the social studies guides. Assessments were provided, along with scoring rubrics, and sufficient detail was incorporated to guide instruction.

In the mathematics curriculum documents that earned a 3 in this criterion, formative and summative assessments were provided for each cluster of objectives outlined in each unit. For example, Math 6 ties each set of objectives to a formative or summative assessment directly. Math 6 also provided numerous suggestions for formative assessments. Math 7 earned a rating of 1 in this criterion; some units, or clusters of objectives, provided no reference to assessment measures.

**Criterion Three:** This was the weakest area of all Stamford Public Schools curriculum documents. No prerequisite knowledge was mentioned in the mathematics or science documents. English language arts and social studies provided some information about the prior knowledge and/or skills necessary to be successful in the current course.

**Criterion Four:** This was an area of strength for the district at the middle school level. All documents earned either a 2 or a 3 rating. Many resources were provided, including links to web sites with additional information or short videos for the students. Math Handbooks linked the objectives to suggested resources to best teach various concepts.

**Criterion Five:** English language arts, social studies, science, and geometry provided suggested strategies for teachers regarding how to best teach or approach the objective in question. This criterion was the second weakest area in the mathematics documents. General suggestions for an approach to the teaching of mathematics were provided by most documents or in the Directory folder. The suggestions lacked the specificity required to earn a 3 rating. Specific examples of teaching strategies were not coupled with all objectives.

For example, in the Geometry Handbook, approximately half the objectives had suggestions about how to introduce or explain the concepts and skills per objective. One example of an approach can be found in the Geometry Handbook: “You may want to show the first 44 seconds of the following video to quickly explain what a dilation is...” In other handbooks, explanations of the objective are provided, but an instructional approach is not. An example can be found in the Algebra I Handbook. For the *Priority Standard F-BF-*: “Write a function that describes a relationship between two quantities,” the following example is given:

“You frequently go to the gym to work out lifting weights. You plan to gradually increase the size of the weights over the next month. You always put two plates that appear to be the same weight on each side of the bar. The plates are not labeled, but you do know the bar weighs 20 kg. How can you express the total weight you lifted on any day? Students will assign a variable for the weight of a plate (say  $w$ ) and derive an expression for the total weight lifted  $4w+20$  or its equivalent.”

**Criterion Six:** This was an area of relative strength for all curriculum documents presented with the exception of mathematics grade 6 and mathematics grade 8. In Math 6 and Math 8, suggested activities were not specifically tied to each objective.

### **Middle School Core Content Area Rating Summary**

The auditors rated the English language arts and social studies curricula as adequate to guide instruction. Science and mathematics curricula were rated inadequate to guide instruction. Those elements that are to be tightly held by the school district were the weaker areas (Objectives, Assessment, and Prerequisites), while the stronger areas were those more loosely held, allowing teachers greater discretion in meeting the needs of their students.

## Middle School Non-Core Content

The only documents that qualified as curriculum guidance documents in the non-core content area at the middle school level were in visual arts. The health and physical education documents were copies of the Connecticut State Standards, and the music documents were from another district. The quality ratings for the qualifying curriculum documents can be seen in the following exhibit.

### Exhibit 2.3.5: Rating of Minimal Basic Components and Specificity of Middle School Visual Arts Curriculum Guides

| Curriculum Document Title | Grade Level | Date | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4    | 5      | 6    | Total Rating |
|---------------------------|-------------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|--------------|
|                           |             |      | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res. | Strat. | Act. |              |
| Middle School Art         | 6           | 2018 | 1    | 2     | 1    | 2    | 1      | 1    | 8            |
| MS Art                    | 7           | 2018 | 1    | 2     | 1    | 2    | 1      | 1    | 8            |
| MS Art                    | 8           | 2018 | 1    | 2     | 1    | 2    | 1      | 1    | 8            |
| Mean by Criterion         |             |      | 1    | 2     | 1    | 2    | 1      | 1    | 8            |

The non-core content area documents provided by the district are inadequate to guide instruction. Each art curriculum guidance document for the middle school grades earned a rating of 8 of a possible 18, or 0% attained the rating necessary to be considered adequate to guide teaching and learning.”

In the visual arts curriculum guidance documents provided by the district in the shared drive, grades 6, 7, and 8 follow the same development pattern as those guides for the high school. Each grade level listed statements about student learning on page one and two. For example, “Combine the visual arts with other art forms to create coherent multimedia.” These statements rise to the level of a measurable, comprehensive objective. At the end of this list of standards/learnings, a list of activities is provided. There seems to be some confusion here. One learning activity listed in grade 6 states, “Recognize evidence and importance of art in society.” This statement does not convey an activity.

Page three lists art vocabulary to be learned during each school year. A nod to Prerequisites appears in the form of the following statement: “Art vocabulary is cumulative and includes words from previous grade levels.”

Page four of the visual arts curriculum is a rubric that incorporates behavior and general art principles for grading purposes. Following the three grade-level outlines is a listing of websites with resources for the three grades.

## Middle School Curriculum Guide Analysis Summary

Six of 17 curriculum documents were considered adequate to guide instruction at the middle school level. Some confusion was evident in the inclusion of materials that did not qualify as local curriculum guidance documents.

## Ratings of the Minimal Basic Components and Specificity of the Elementary Level Curriculum Guides

The next two exhibits provide graphics of the ratings for the elementary curriculum guidance documents provided to the auditors. **Exhibit 2.3.6** delineates the core content area guide ratings, while **Exhibit 2.3.7** provides the non-core content area ratings.

### Exhibit 2.3.6: Rating of Minimal Basic Components and Specificity of Elementary Core Content Curriculum Guides



| Curriculum Document Title | Grade Level | Date | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4    | 5      | 6    | Total Rating |
|---------------------------|-------------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|--------------|
|                           |             |      | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res. | Strat. | Act. |              |
| Social Studies            | K           | 2018 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 10           |
| Social Studies            | 1           | 2018 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 10           |
| Social Studies            | 2           | 2018 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 10           |
| Social Studies            | 3           | 2018 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 10           |
| Social Studies            | 4           | 2018 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 10           |
| Social Studies            | 5           | 2018 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 3    | 2      | 3    | 10           |
| Mathematics               | K           | Unk. | 2    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Math                      | 1           | Unk. | 2    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Math                      | 2           | Unk. | 2    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Math                      | 3           | Unk. | 2    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Math                      | 4           | Unk. | 2    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Math                      | 5           | Unk. | 2    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 2    | 4            |
| Science                   | K           | Unk. | 1    | 0     | 0    | 0    | 0      | 0    | 1            |
| Mean by Criterion         |             |      | 1.5  | 0.5   | 0    | 1.4  | 0.9    | 2.3  | 7            |

Thirteen of a possible 36 qualifying documents in the core content areas at the elementary level. None of the documents were considered adequate to guide instruction as they did not earn a score of 14 or higher. The strongest area, with the exception of kindergarten science, was Suggested Activities. None of the documents included information regarding prerequisites.

The social studies documents were the strongest curriculum guidance documents at the elementary level. However, it appears as though the main body of the document may be from another, uncredited source. Stamford Public Schools information is attached to the document in the form of a scope and sequence chart. The mathematics material was another set of pacing guides, with some activities and vague standards/objectives. And finally, kindergarten science provided a listing of topics taught in the form of a pacing chart.

The elementary literacy information consisted of a few units in grades 1 and 4. No other information was provided. Science material in grades 1-5 was a copy of the teacher's edition and disqualified.

### Elementary School

The only qualifying documents in the non-core content area at the elementary level were provided in the area of visual arts. The following provides the auditors' analysis of the quality of those documents.

### Exhibit 2.3.7: Rating of Minimal Basic Components and Specificity of Elementary School Visual Arts Curriculum Guides

| Curriculum Document Title | Grade Level | Date | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4    | 5      | 6    | Total Rating |
|---------------------------|-------------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|--------------|
|                           |             |      | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res. | Strat. | Act. |              |
| Visual Arts               | K           | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 2    | 0      | 1    | 5            |
| Art                       | 1           | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 2    | 0      | 1    | 5            |
| Art                       | 2           | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 2    | 0      | 1    | 5            |
| Art                       | 3           | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 2    | 0      | 1    | 5            |
| Art                       | 4           | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 2    | 0      | 1    | 5            |
| Art                       | 5           | 2008 | 1    | 1     | 0    | 2    | 0      | 1    | 5            |
| Mean by Criterion         |             |      | 1    | 1     | 0    | 2    | 0      | 1    | 5            |

The visual arts curriculum guidance document contained a vague delineation of standards, a mention of some assessment that was not tied to the objectives, a list of resources, and some activities. Dated 2008, the visual arts material is outdated. Since none of the documents were rated 14 or higher they are considered inadequate to guide instruction.

Some elementary documents in the non-core area did not qualify as Stamford Public Schools curriculum guidance documents: In the area of health and physical education, a copy of the Connecticut State Standards was provided to auditors as a curriculum; music material came from another school district in Connecticut; English learners material consisted of either empty folders or material for students regarding testing.

#### Pacing Guides

The district relies heavily on pacing guides in the elementary school and continues to use pacing guides in a few areas in the middle school. In interviews, when auditors asked building administrators how they monitored the delivery of the district curriculum, they responded: “We have a chart of what teachers should be teaching,” and “I use the pacing charts to check in on where teachers are in the units of study.”

The auditors examined each pacing guide using the CMSi Pacing Guide Criteria shown in the next exhibit. All the pacing guides and scope and sequence material at the middle and elementary levels were similar. The pacing charts followed a similar format and provided similar information to teachers. Were the auditors to provide a detailed rating for each pacing chart, the ratings would be almost identical. The auditors chose to use the rating for elementary social studies as an example for the district.

### Exhibit 2.3.8: Pacing Chart Evaluation for Elementary Social Studies

| Audit Criteria  | Auditors' Rating | Auditors' Comments         |
|---|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <b>Time Frame and Flexibility:</b> The chart suggests a time frame for teaching the standards/objectives, but the language of the directions is clear in stipulating that it is the teacher's ultimate decision as to when each standard/objective is taught to individual students. This gives teachers flexibility in delivering content at the appropriate instructional level for individual students. | P*               | No mention of flexibility. |
| 2. <b>Feasibility:</b> The chart is designed in such a way that the amount of time provided for learning the standard/objective is reasonable.  | X                |                            |

| Audit Criteria   | Auditors' Rating | Auditors' Comments  |
|--|------------------|---|
| 3. <b>Precision and Non-duplication:</b> The standards/objectives in the chart are written in language that is precise and non-duplicative (unless adequate rationale for duplication is provided).  |                  | There is duplication with middle school in social studies (the study of Egypt and Japan). |
| 4. <b>Curricular Differentiation:</b> The chart includes written expectations that teachers are to differentiate the curriculum based upon the diagnostic assessment of each student's progress in mastering the concepts, skills, and knowledge they are expected to learn. This allows teachers to know where each student is with regard to the entire sequence of objectives, so that instruction is at the right curricular level for each student. |                  |   |
| 5. <b>Initial Acquisition and Mastery Aspects Are Present:</b> The chart in some way indicates when learnings are initially acquired, and when additional practice is intermittently provided to move students to mastery (long-term retention) of the learning.   |                  |   |
| 6. <b>Linkage to Formative Assessments:</b> District staff use assessments that are clearly tied to pacing standards/objectives. These assessments are to be used to help teachers differentiate their teaching and make instructional decisions about the initial acquisition of learning. Assessments are not only used in a summative manner.   |                  |   |
| 7. [If the district has benchmarks tied to pacing charts] <b>Flexibility in Administering Formative Assessments:</b> Assessments tied to the standards/objectives of the pacing chart are administered to the individual student when he or she is ready to take the assessments, rather than all students at the same time.   |                  |   |
| <b>Mean Criterion Score</b>  | <b>1</b>         |   |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>  | <b>14%</b>       |   |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met  |                  |   |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.   |                  |   |
| ©2021 CMSi   |                  |   |

The SPS pacing charts do not meet the criteria for adequacy for instructional guidance with a rating of 14%. The number of topics appear feasible for the time allotted. The study of Japan and Egypt is inserted into grade 3. These units are not congruent with the state curriculum or the remainder of the elementary program. The auditors found these topics in the middle school standards at the state level.

### Elementary Level Curriculum Guide Analysis Summary

As previously stated in **Finding 2.2**, Scope of the Written Curriculum, there appears to be confusion regarding what a curriculum guide or curriculum guidance document is. At the elementary level, the auditors were presented with unit plans for two grades in the area of English language arts (literacy) and copies of a Foss teacher's manual in science. Neither of these is a district-wide curriculum guide. Upon searching the public websites for both district and each school, the auditors did find some school-specific curriculum documents (see **Finding 2.2**). However, these were not included in **Finding 2.2** or **2.3** as some were outdated, and others were not district-wide.

Additionally, the pacing charts that are available to teachers are also inadequate to guide instruction. The available scope and sequence and pacing charts provided were vague listings of topics, some with

allusions to standards, and the time frame in which teachers are to deliver the content. These charts lack the specificity needed to direct instruction for teachers or to assist supervisors in monitoring instruction. None of the documents available at the elementary level are adequate in quality or specificity to guide instruction effectively.

### Summary of Curriculum Document Quality District-wide

The following exhibit displays a summary of the auditors’ ratings for the quality and specificity of the core curriculum documents of the Stamford Public School District.

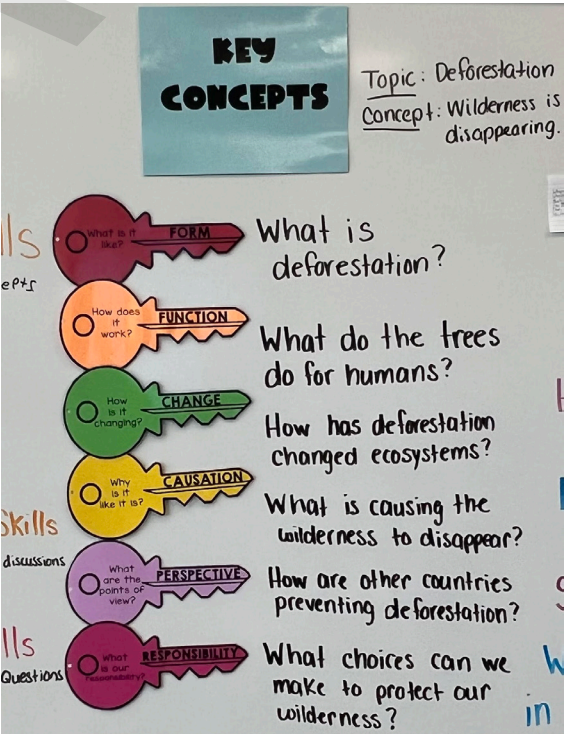
**Exhibit 2.3.9: Summary of Auditors’ Ratings of Core Curriculum Documents Quality, Grades K-12**

| School Level                        | Number of Guides Rated | 1    | 2     | 3    | 4    | 5      | 6    | Total Mean Ratings |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|--------------------|
|                                     |                        | Obj. | Asmt. | Pre. | Res. | Strat. | Act. |                    |
| Core Content Area Curriculum Guides |                        |      |       |      |      |        |      |                    |
| Elementary (K-5)                    | 13                     | 1.5  | .5    | 0    | 1.4  | 0.9    | 2.3  | 7                  |
| Middle Grades (6-8)                 | 14                     | 2.1  | 2.1   | 0.6  | 2.6  | 2.1    | 2.5  | 12                 |
| High School (9-12)                  | 54                     | 2.4  | 2.7   | 1.7  | 1.8  | 2.6    | 2.6  | 14                 |
| Mean Ratings (Core Content)         | 81                     | 2    | 1.8   | 0.8  | 1.9  | 1.9    | 2.5  | 11                 |

As can be seen, 81 core curriculum documents were available for review. Of those, the elementary guides scored the lowest (7); the high school guides scored the highest (14).

Of the 81 qualifying curriculum guidance documents in evidence, the auditors rated 47 as meeting the criterion standard for quality and specificity, 41 at the high school level, 6 at the middle school level, and 0 at the elementary level. The remainder of the documents do not meet audit criteria and are rated inadequate to guide instruction with the specificity necessary to promote vertical and horizontal articulation, comprehensive guidance, or effective planning for teachers. In addition, the pacing guides, which serve as de facto curriculum guidance documents and monitoring device, are inadequate to direct instruction.

Overall, the quality of the written curriculum for the Stamford Public Schools is inadequate to ensure horizontal and vertical alignment, equity of curriculum access for all students, effective delivery of instruction, or assessment of students’ progress or needs (see **Recommendation 2**). The overall average of curriculum adequacy ratings for the district can be misleading. The elementary level quality ratings skew the average downward. At the high school level, the average rating of the 54 documents presented is 14, meeting the audit’s expectation for adequate guidance for teachers. The middle school level approaches adequacy, with an overall average rating of 12.



*Strawberry Hill Key Concepts for guiding discussion*

**Finding 2.4: Although most artifacts were on grade level, many elementary artifacts were generally of low cognitive demand, and both elementary and secondary artifacts employed less-engaging contexts.**

Student work artifacts—the tasks students perform either in-person or virtually—provide valuable information to district leaders about how course standards are being interpreted and teachers deliver the written curriculum. Artifacts must address the same content as described by the district curriculum with cognitive demands equal to or exceeding that which is required by the state standards. Similarly, artifacts should be aligned to the requirements of the assessment students will take at the conclusion of a course, both in content and cognitive demand. Artifacts can also sometimes reveal inequities in curriculum access among schools, subgroups, and content areas, giving districts the ability to see and address specific areas of need.

District leaders provided auditors with collected artifacts provided to them by building principals. Some teachers provided a short, written description of the lesson on the artifact. Some teachers submitted detailed lesson plans with descriptions of student performance. All artifacts included school name, course, grade level, content area, and state standard aligned to the lesson in which the teacher utilized the artifact. District leaders collected a total of 1,181 elementary artifacts and 425 secondary viable artifacts for analysis. If an artifact did not contain the minimum information requested, the auditors did not analyze that artifact. Thorough artifact analysis can provide insight into possible areas of weakness with regard to content, context, and cognitive type alignment to the standards for each content area and grade level.

Overall, auditors found most artifacts to be on grade level. Even so, auditors found the cognitive demand of the elementary artifacts and secondary mathematics and English language arts artifacts low, and the contexts at both elementary and secondary levels often of the least engaging types.

### **Objective Content Calibration**

Objective content refers to the knowledge, skills, processes, and attitudes to be taught as expressed by a student learning objective. For this type of analysis, reviewers calibrated the instructional level of the student artifact by comparing the content area skill or concept to be mastered to the Connecticut state standards. From this calibration, an actual grade level/course content specification can be determined for each artifact by curricular area. The actual grade level of each artifact is then tallied for each grade level to derive a percentage of artifacts on grade level. For example, consider six artifacts in grade 4 and auditors determined three to be on grade level and three to be below grade level. Auditors would report this as 50% at grade level and 50% below grade level.

Auditors place the data in a table showing the distribution of the actual grade level of the artifacts, as determined by the analysis. Auditors calibrate the grade levels by multiplying the number of artifacts to determine the average level of difficulty for all artifacts in that grade level. For example, if grade 4 has six artifacts with three at grade level and three below grade level, auditors multiply 3 by 3 for a score of 9 and 3 by 4 for a score of 12. These numbers are added together for a score of 21, then divided by the total number of artifacts for grade 4, 21 divided by 6, for an average grade level score of 3.5. Auditors note this is *not* a grade equivalent score; it merely reflects the average grade level the artifacts represent. Of more import are the percentages in the body of the exhibit table, which show the percentage of artifacts calibrating either lower or higher than their purported grade levels. Also of import are the percentages of artifacts that are determined to be content mismatches (CM). Content mismatch artifacts do not correspond to any of the objectives at any grade level and are thus not aligned in content to



the state standards. Auditors do not count content mismatches in the average of artifact grade levels. Additionally, auditors note it is the *activity* of the artifact that is evaluated, *not* a student's actual work. The student's actual work may represent an even lower, or higher, grade level than what the artifact itself requires. Auditors also note grade level calibrations represent a cross section of the types of work teachers ask students to do to demonstrate mastery of the standards being taught.

The exhibit below shows the content calibration for the elementary student work artifacts.

**Exhibit 2.4.1: Grade Level Calibration K-5**

| Grade Level from which Artifact was Collected            | Percent of Artifacts compared with Grade Level Standards Distributed by Grade |     |     |     |     |     |    | Average Grade Level of Student Work |
|--|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-------------------------------------|
|  | K   | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | CM |                                     |
| <b>K</b>   | 99%   |     |     |     |     |     | 1% | <b>0</b>                            |
| <b>1</b>   | 1%  | 97% |     |     |     |     | 2% | <b>.99</b>                          |
| <b>2</b>   | 1%  | 1%  | 96% |     |     |     | 2% | <b>1.94</b>                         |
| <b>3</b>   | 1%  | 5%  |     | 94% |     |     | 0% | <b>2.85</b>                         |
| <b>4</b>   |   | 2%  |     |     | 96% |     | 2% | <b>3.93</b>                         |
| <b>5</b>   |   | 2%  |     |     |     | 96% | 2% | <b>4.91</b>                         |
| * For calibration purposes, Kindergarten as a level is 0 |   |     |     |     |     |     |    |                                     |
| Data Sources: District provided artifacts                |   |     |     |     |     |     |    |                                     |

As noted from the above exhibit, auditors classified all elementary artifacts 96% on grade level, 2% below grade level, and 1.5% of artifacts were "Content Mismatches." Artifacts were classified as content mismatches if the activity of the artifact did not correspond to the standards at any grade level. An example of a content mismatch was an artifact labeled with a 5<sup>th</sup> grade social studies theme focusing on individuals and societies related to GEO 5.2: Explain how culture influences the way people modify and adapt to their environments. The corresponding task required students to create a physical map of a country of their choice, including all physical land features and the three largest cities.

Below shows the content calibration for the secondary student work artifacts.

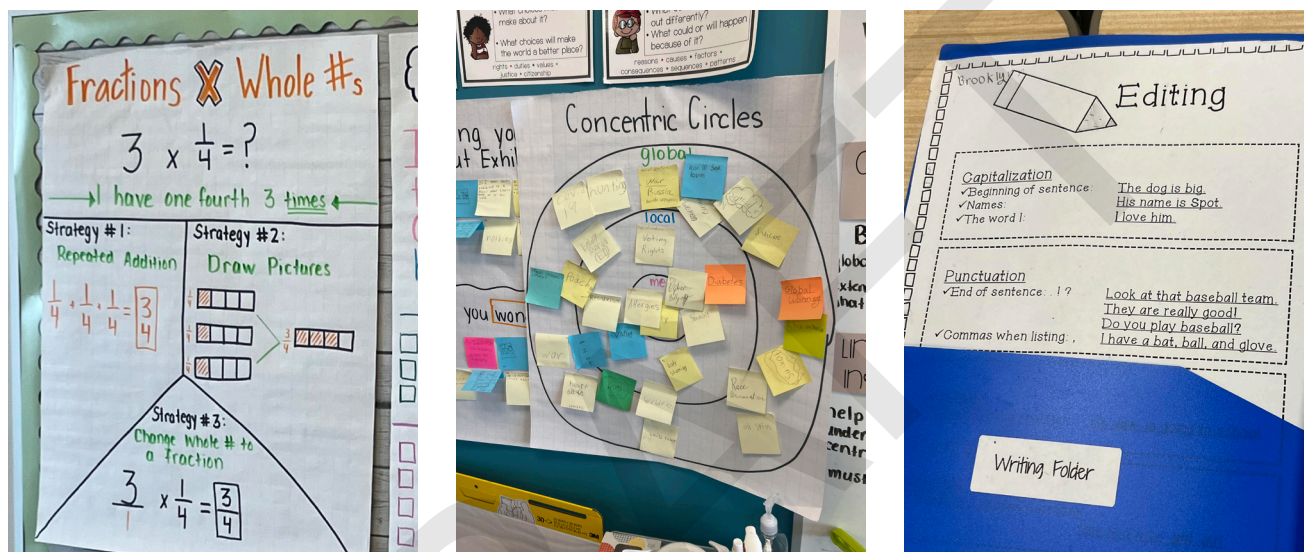
**Exhibit 2.4.2: Grade Level Calibration 6-12**

| Grade Level from which Artifact was Collected | Percent of Artifacts compared with Grade Level Standards Distributed by Grade |      |      |     |      |      |     |    | Average Grade Level of Student Work |
|---|---|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|----|-------------------------------------|
|   | 6   | 7    | 8    | 9   | 10   | 11   | 12  | CM |                                     |
| <b>6</b>                                      | 98%   |      |      |     |      |      |     |    | <b>5.9</b>                          |
| <b>7</b>                                      |   | 100% |      |     |      |      |     |    | <b>7.0</b>                          |
| <b>8</b>                                      |   |      | 100% |     |      |      |     |    | <b>8.0</b>                          |
| <b>9</b>                                      | 1%  |      |      | 99% |      |      |     |    | <b>8.95</b>                         |
| <b>10</b>                                     |   |      |      |     | 100% |      |     |    | <b>10.0</b>                         |
| <b>11</b>                                     |   |      |      |     |      | 100% |     |    | <b>11.0</b>                         |
| <b>12</b>                                     | 15%   |      |      |     |      |      | 81% | 4% | <b>11.0</b>                         |

As noted above, auditors rated most secondary artifacts (97%) on grade level with six secondary artifacts below level. Two sixth grade English language arts artifacts were aligned to elementary standards. Auditors classified one secondary artifact as a content mismatch, meaning the activity of the artifact did not correspond to the standards at any grade level.

Most artifacts not on grade level were ELA artifacts. An example of a 12<sup>th</sup> grade ELA artifact that was not on grade level referenced the standard: W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. However, the task required students to generate a list of questions about a famous contemporary person and utilize Google to locate the answers to these questions. This task is more closely aligned with a sixth grade standard W.6.7: Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing inquiry when appropriate.

Overall, auditors found 1.5% of the elementary artifacts were content mismatches while secondary artifacts showed one content mismatch at grade 12.



Graphic organizers are on display in some classrooms to help students understanding of key concepts.

## Cognitive Type Analysis

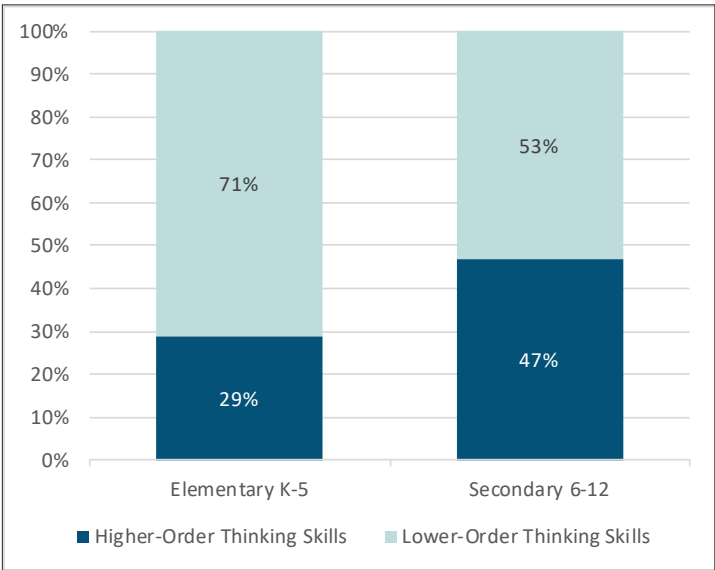
Cognitive type is an indicator of the type of thinking required to carry out a given task. Auditors expect the cognitive types of the written, taught, and tested curricula to be congruent, so students are not surprised by any of the cognitive demands placed on them in high-stakes testing situations. The various assignments and activities collected in classrooms across the district should reveal a range of cognitive demands, demonstrating ample practice opportunities and higher-order thinking skills. Research shows student learning improves dramatically when teachers engage students in problem solving, critical thinking, and decision-making activities that are grounded in content area knowledge. In the simplest terms, the more teachers require students to work with grade-level content that is cognitively demanding, the better they perform on high-stakes tests.

To perform an analysis of cognitive type, auditors used the framework based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy of cognitive domains as presented in **Appendix D**.

To analyze the cognitive types of the various artifacts collected, auditors compared the activity of each artifact to the Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, recorded the cognitive type of each artifact, and used those totals, divided by the total number of artifacts, to determine the percentage of each type. In the following exhibit, lower-order thinking skills include remembering, understanding, and applying, while higher-order thinking skills include analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Auditors constructed the exhibits to show the proportion of lower- to higher-order thinking skills present in the artifacts.

The following shows the distribution of higher- and lower-order thinking skills for the Stamford Public Schools student work artifacts.

**Exhibit 2.4.3: Proportion of Lower- and Higher-Order Thinking Skills, Grades K-5 and 6-12**

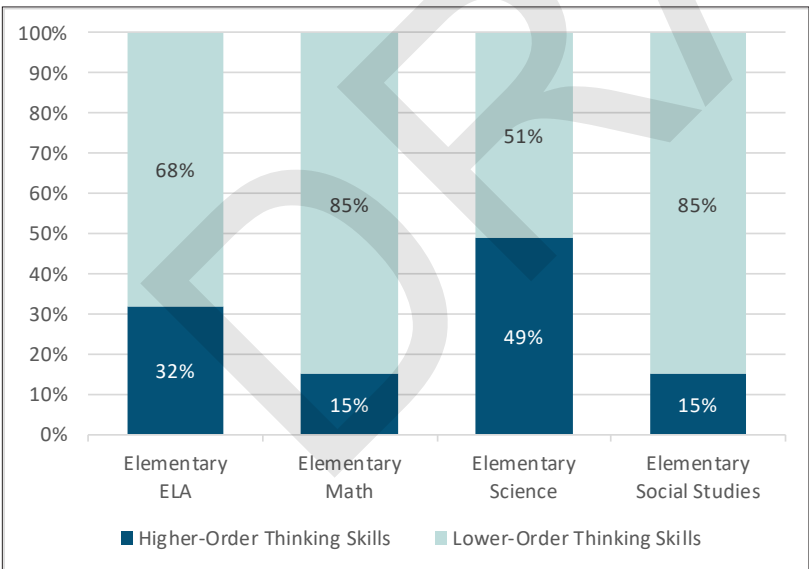


As illustrated in this exhibit, 71% of elementary artifacts (K-5) required lower-order thinking skills (remembering, understanding, applying) to complete. The remaining 29% of elementary artifacts required higher-order thinking skills (analyzing, evaluating, creating) to complete. For secondary (6-12) artifacts, 53% required lower-order thinking skills to complete, and 47% required higher-order thinking skills to complete.

Overall, cognitive demand of elementary artifacts was generally low, while close to half of the secondary artifacts required higher-order thinking skills.

The following shows the distribution of higher- and lower-order thinking skills for Stamford Public Schools elementary student work artifacts by content area (English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies).

**Exhibit 2.4.4: Proportion of Lower- and Higher-Order Thinking Skills by Elementary Content Area**



As shown in this exhibit, over two thirds (68%) of elementary (K-5) ELA artifacts required lower-order thinking skills, while 32% of ELA artifacts required higher-order thinking skills. Most of the elementary mathematics artifacts (85%) required lower-order thinking skills, while 15% required higher-order thinking skills.

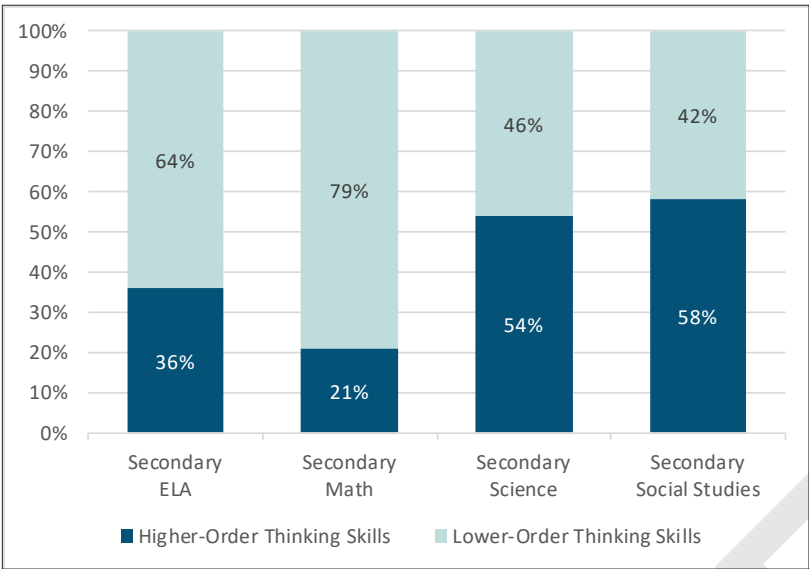
Of the elementary science artifacts, nearly half (49%) required higher-order thinking skills, while more than half (51%) required lower-order thinking skills. Most of the elementary social studies artifacts (85%) required lower-order thinking skills, while 15% required higher-order thinking skills.

order thinking skills, while 15% required higher-order thinking skills.

Overall, cognitive demand of elementary English language arts, mathematics, and social studies artifacts was generally low, while cognitive demand of elementary science artifacts was significantly higher.

The following shows the distribution of higher- and lower-order thinking skills for Stamford Public Schools secondary student work artifacts by content area (English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies).

**Exhibit 2.4.5: Proportion of Lower- and Higher-Order Thinking Skills by Secondary Content Area**



As shown in this exhibit, 64% of secondary (6-12) ELA artifacts required lower-order thinking skills; most artifacts requiring higher-order thinking included written responses to literature, argumentative writing, or text analysis. Secondary mathematics artifacts were mostly lower-order thinking tasks at 79%, with 21% requiring higher-order thinking. Of those lower-order thinking skills, 67% required students to apply knowledge and skills to a new situation.

Of the secondary science artifacts, 46% required lower-order thinking skills, while 54% required higher-order

thinking skills. Many higher-order science artifacts were labs that involved inquiry-based instruction and drawing conclusions. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the secondary social studies artifacts required higher-order thinking skills, while 42% required lower-order thinking skills. Higher-order thinking skills tasks included document-based questions and written arguments.

Overall, cognitive demand of secondary English language arts and mathematics artifacts was generally low, while the cognitive demand of science and social studies artifacts was higher.

**Context Analysis**

Context is another deeper dimension of alignment that refers to *how* students engage with a task. Students should engage with content in a variety of ways, demonstrating mastery in multiple contexts within a course. The exhibit below provides definitions of the contexts used by auditors. A multiple-choice question differs greatly from an essay question; assessments that are taken online are different than those requiring bubble sheets and pencils. A problem requiring a single operation to reach the answer is different than a problem requiring multiple steps. Districts should employ the philosophy of “No Surprises,” which means that students should be prepared ahead of time for the contexts they will likely encounter on state and national assessments. Practicing the ways in which a student might be assessed is one way that a teacher can increase the chances of success for students. However, sometimes state tests do not utilize engaging contexts or include test items of high cognitive demand, and in those cases, it is incumbent on the district to ensure that students go beyond the low expectations of the test. Teachers should employ a variety of tasks allowing students to engage with content in ways that extend beyond the high-stakes test into real-world scenarios and meaningful contexts.

Context also determines the level of cognitive engagement students will likely experience during a lesson. Cognitive engagement is the level to which the student is intellectually interested and participating in the activity, which auditors expect to vary across multiple artifacts. Certain types of contexts—ways in which students are called upon to demonstrate their learning—are inherently less engaging than others and less likely to promote retention of the material. Students identifying soil attributes using fill-in-the-blank worksheets and a textbook chapter will be less engaged than those in a hands-on lab where they are required to pour water over soil samples and observe and record what happens. For most students, particularly those who do not learn as readily as others, the second method is more likely to have impact



and increase chances students will retain the information. They will be more cognitively engaged and will therefore learn more. Auditors expect a higher proportion of classroom contexts in the lower grades, but more real world and meaningful writing to occur as students move up the grades. Auditors also expect a higher proportion of real world or simulated real world contexts in science classes, based on how students best learn science content. Auditors expect to see more meaningful writing in English language arts classes because of the state standards specifically aligned to writing tasks.

Below shows the types of contexts reviewers noted.

#### **Exhibit 2.4.6: Context Types and Definitions**

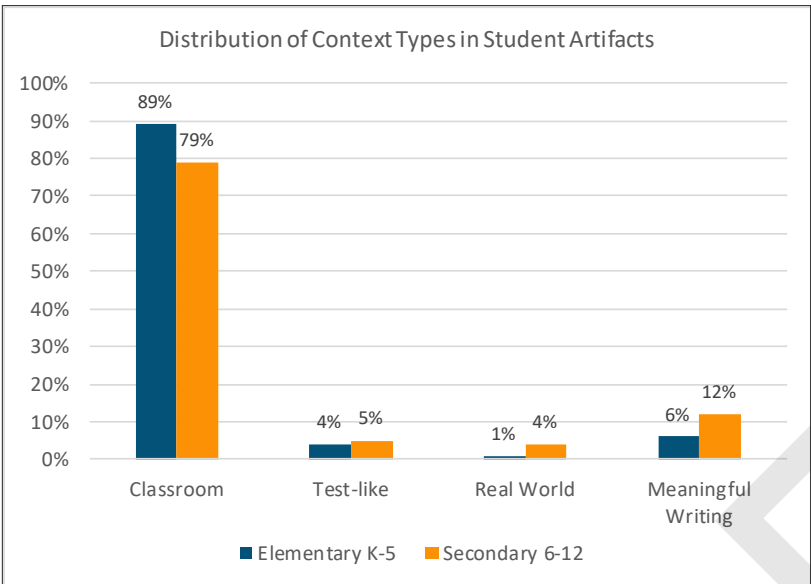
| <b>Context</b>                                  | <b>Explanation</b>  | <b>Examples</b>  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Real World/<br/>Simulated Real<br/>World</b> | This type of context replicates activities found in the real world. It is often a hands-on activity.  | Writing a business letter; building a ramp to measure acceleration and velocity; researching a historical period and designing costumes for a play set in that period; planning a travel itinerary; creating a budget using salary and expense information; learning songs in a target language. |
| <b>Test-like</b>                                | This context replicates activities and tasks from released test items or from other exit exams in use by the district, such as AP exams. It allows students to practice skills prior to the test. It is important to note that quizzes and tests from a classroom setting do not necessarily fall into this category. | Marking a bubble sheet; selecting from multiple-choice items; constructing a short answer; writing an extended response; fill-in-the-blank and true/false questions.   |
| <b>Classroom<br/>Activity</b>                   | This context is comprised of activities that are unlikely to be found outside a classroom.  | Vocabulary worksheets; answering questions at the end of a chapter; solving math problems; marking geographical features on a map; labeling parts of a cell; locating examples of figurative language in a poem; fill-in-the-blank worksheets.   |
| <b>Meaningful<br/>Writing</b>                   | This context requires students to use higher-order thinking skills to complete the writing. The writing is usually of an extended nature.   | Researching, formulating, and defending a position; analyzing and critiquing a piece of literature; hypothesizing, testing, and evaluating a theory or premise; writing a personal narrative utilizing techniques learned in class.  |

The audit expectation is that all contexts are valid and should be employed in classrooms when appropriate. However, test-like and classroom contexts are less engaging for students than real world and meaningful writing contexts. At the very least, there is an expectation of a balance of contexts, but the more engaging contexts should be desired as these promote the most learning. As students advance, they should engage in more meaningful contexts that are connected to real-world application and meaningful writing.



The following shows the distribution of contexts for Stamford Public Schools artifacts.

**Exhibit 2.4.7: Distribution of Contexts in Student Work Artifacts**



Classroom contexts occurred in 89% of elementary artifacts (K-5). Test-like contexts occurred in 4% of the elementary artifacts for a total of 93% in the two least engaging contexts. Meaningful writing occurred in 6% of elementary artifacts. This is one of the most engaging contexts for students and typically requires the highest levels of cognition. Real world contexts occurred in 1% of artifacts. Real world contexts are highly engaging for students and promote retention of concepts.

At the secondary level, 79% of artifacts used classroom contexts and 5% used test-like contexts, for a total of 84% in the least engaging contexts for students. A further 12% of secondary artifacts used meaningful writing, and 4% used real world contexts, for a total of 16% promoting the most engagement and retention for students.

Elementary English language arts did not have any real world contexts. Of the artifacts rated, 8% were test-like, 12% were meaningful writing, and 80% were classroom contexts. Most elementary mathematics artifacts were classroom contexts (98%). Of the remaining artifacts, 1% were test-like, 1% were real world, and 1% were meaningful writing.

One percent of the elementary science artifacts were meaningful writing, 2% were test-like, 5% were real world, and 92% were classroom contexts. Elementary social studies artifacts were mostly classroom contexts (88%). The remaining artifacts were 1% real-world, 4% meaningful writing, and 7% test-like contexts.

The secondary ELA artifacts did not have any real-world contexts. Auditors rated the secondary ELA artifacts at 2% test-like, 28% meaningful writing, and 70% classroom. The secondary mathematics artifacts were mostly of the least engaging contexts (92%) while 6% used real world context and 2% used meaningful writing contexts. Auditors rated secondary science at mostly classroom context (86%). Notably, the middle school science artifacts used only classroom contexts; the high school artifacts included 3% test-like, 10% real world, and 1% meaningful writing contexts. The secondary social studies artifacts were mostly classroom contexts (80%), with 18% of artifacts using meaningful writing contexts and 1% each of test-like and real-world contexts.

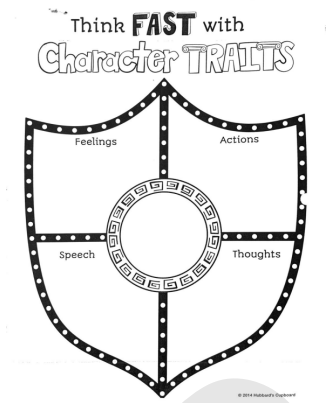
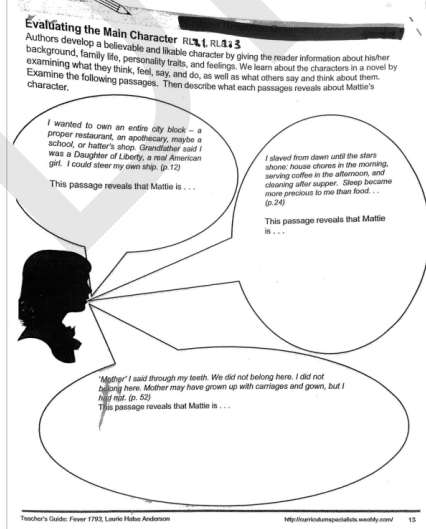
Overall, auditors rated most artifacts as the least engaging types in context and unlikely to promote retention. Even in courses where auditors expected to see more real world and meaningful writing, they found primarily classroom contexts.

**Topological and Deep Alignment**

Auditors completed an analysis of a sampling of English language arts and mathematics artifacts to determine the alignment between those artifacts and state standards. The topological and deep alignment analysis examines alignment of the content, context, and cognition of the task to the standard

identified on the artifact. Auditors use three ratings for alignment: inadequately aligned, topologically aligned, or deeply aligned. An inadequately aligned task is an indication of no alignment between the task and the standard. A topologically aligned task is an indication of a match between the standard and the task. A deeply aligned task is an indication that the task expands beyond the demands of the standard into higher-level thinking and meaningful tasks. The next exhibit reports auditors' analysis of a sampling of tasks to the state standards for grades 4, 7, and 9 English language arts.

#### Exhibit 2.4.8: Alignment of Artifacts to State Standards English Language Arts, Grades 4, 7, and 9

| Standard   | Artifact  | Alignment Analysis  |
|--|---|---|
| <b>English Language Arts, Grade 4</b>  |   |   |
| <b>RL.4.3.</b> Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g. a character's thoughts, words, or actions)  | <p><b>Students complete a graphic organizer to identify the feelings, actions, speech, and thoughts of a character in a story</b></p>   | <p><b>Content: Inadequately Aligned</b></p> <p>Students read a text and then identify character traits about a single character, focused on identifying the feelings, actions, speech, and thoughts of that character. This task is not aligned to the standard because the standard requires an in-depth description of the character that draws on specific text-based evidence. The task does not require students to select specific evidence from the text, nor does it require an in-depth description of the character.</p> <p><b>Context: Not Completed</b></p> <p>Since the content is inadequately aligned, neither the context nor the cognition analysis can be completed.</p> <p><b>Cognition: Not Completed</b></p>   |
| <b>English Language Arts, Grade 7</b>  |   |   |
| <p><b>RL.7.1.:</b> Cite several pieces of text evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text</p> <p><b>RL7.3:</b> Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or the plot)</p> | <p><b>Students re-read specific passages from a novel and use these provided excerpts to analyze a character's traits, interactions with other characters, and impact on the plot</b></p>  | <p><b>Content: Topologically Aligned</b></p> <p>Students are reading a complex, grade level text and exploring what specific excerpts from that text reveal about a character. Students will analyze the character's actions, how the character feels about specific events in the story, and how the character interacts with other characters to arrive at deep understanding of the character.</p> <p><b>Context: Topologically Aligned</b></p> <p>Students will craft a written response that connects inferences about a character and text evidence to support their conclusions.</p> <p><b>Cognition: Topologically Aligned</b></p> <p>The standards require analysis of a complex text, including the interaction of story elements—the main character and the story's plot, dialogue, and setting—with citations of text evidence to support the analysis. The cognitive demands of this task include analysis and drawing conclusions from multiple pieces of textual evidence.</p> |

| Standard   | Artifact   | Alignment Analysis |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--------------------|------|------------------------|--|--|--|--------------------------|--|---|--|---------------------------|--|--|--|---------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| English Language Arts, Grade 9   |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| <p><b>RL.9-10.1.</b> Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text</p> <p><b>W.9-10.1.</b> Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence</p>  | <p><b>Students analyze how different themes are presented in a complex text and students make connections between that text and the real world, students' knowledge of history, and other complex texts</b></p> <div><p>Grade Level: English 9<br/>Synthesis Unit: <i>Warriors Don't Cry</i><br/>CC Standards:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RL.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</li><li>• W.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</li></ul><p>Reading Responses</p><p>In each entry:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respond to the question(s).</li><li>• Support your responses by using evidence from the text (with quotations and page numbers) and by making connections to your own life and real world examples. (Use at least one quote and one connection for each entry.)</li></ul><table><tr><th></th><th>Due:</th></tr><tr><td>1. Chapters 1-5: Power</td><td></td></tr><tr><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why do you think Melba signs up to attend Central High School?</li><li>• What does the attack on Melba in Chapter 3, after the Brown v. Board of Education law is passed, reveal about racism and power during this time period?</li></ul></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>2. Chapters 6-10: Hatred</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>The Little Rock Nine's first day of school was filled with violence and hatred.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is hatred and where does it come from?</li><li>• What are some examples of the hate they experienced that day?</li><li>• Even though the protesters didn't personally know the African American students, why were they so filled with hate?</li></ul></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>3. Chapters 11-17: Change</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Danny, Melba's bodyguard, tells her "It takes a warrior to fight a battle and survive. This here is a battle if I've ever seen one" (154).<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the battle he is referring to?</li><li>• How can a child or young adult help create change and make a difference in society? (Think about <i>The Children's March</i> and the goal they were trying to accomplish.)</li></ul></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>4. Chapters 18-23: Indifference</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Recall Elie Wiesel's speech, "The Perils of Indifference." He warns against the harmful effects of not caring about our fellow human beings.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How does Wiesel's speech connect to <i>Warriors Don't Cry</i>? (Think about Melba's encounters with those who harm and help her.)</li></ul></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>5. Chapters 24-28: Interdependence</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>In the last line of text Melba states, "The task that remains is to cope with our interdependence—to see ourselves reflected in every other human being and to respect and honor our differences" (312).<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain why Melba chooses to end her memoir with this statement.</li><li>• Do you believe that The Little Rock Nine accomplished the goals they set out to achieve?</li></ul></td><td></td></tr></table></div> |                    | Due: | 1. Chapters 1-5: Power |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why do you think Melba signs up to attend Central High School?</li><li>• What does the attack on Melba in Chapter 3, after the Brown v. Board of Education law is passed, reveal about racism and power during this time period?</li></ul> |  | 2. 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This task addresses the content of the standard: use of text evidence in the development of an argument to analyze substantive topics and texts.</p> <p><b>Context: Topologically aligned</b></p> <p>Students read a complex text, write an argument to support a claim, and use textual evidence to support their claim. The resulting product is a written argument comprised of valid reasoning and relevant textual evidence to support the claim.</p> <p><b>Cognition: Deeply Aligned</b></p> <p>The standard requires students to engage in thorough examination of substantive topics from a text and then communicate a claim about those topics through a written response. This task requires students to read a complex novel, analyze various themes found within the text, and develop an argument centered around those themes. The task goes beyond the standard as students are required to make connections to the real world, other historical events, and other texts they've read.</p> |
|  | Due:   |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| 1. Chapters 1-5: Power   |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why do you think Melba signs up to attend Central High School?</li><li>• What does the attack on Melba in Chapter 3, after the Brown v. Board of Education law is passed, reveal about racism and power during this time period?</li></ul>   |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| 2. Chapters 6-10: Hatred   |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| The Little Rock Nine's first day of school was filled with violence and hatred. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is hatred and where does it come from?</li><li>• What are some examples of the hate they experienced that day?</li><li>• Even though the protesters didn't personally know the African American students, why were they so filled with hate?</li></ul>  |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| 3. Chapters 11-17: Change  |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| Danny, Melba's bodyguard, tells her "It takes a warrior to fight a battle and survive. This here is a battle if I've ever seen one" (154). <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the battle he is referring to?</li><li>• How can a child or young adult help create change and make a difference in society? (Think about <i>The Children's March</i> and the goal they were trying to accomplish.)</li></ul>       |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| 4. Chapters 18-23: Indifference  |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| Recall Elie Wiesel's speech, "The Perils of Indifference." He warns against the harmful effects of not caring about our fellow human beings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How does Wiesel's speech connect to <i>Warriors Don't Cry</i>? (Think about Melba's encounters with those who harm and help her.)</li></ul>   |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| 5. Chapters 24-28: Interdependence   |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |
| In the last line of text Melba states, "The task that remains is to cope with our interdependence—to see ourselves reflected in every other human being and to respect and honor our differences" (312). <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain why Melba chooses to end her memoir with this statement.</li><li>• Do you believe that The Little Rock Nine accomplished the goals they set out to achieve?</li></ul> |  |                    |      |                        |  |  |  |                          |  |   |  |                           |  |  |  |                                 |  |  |  |                                    |  |  |  |   |

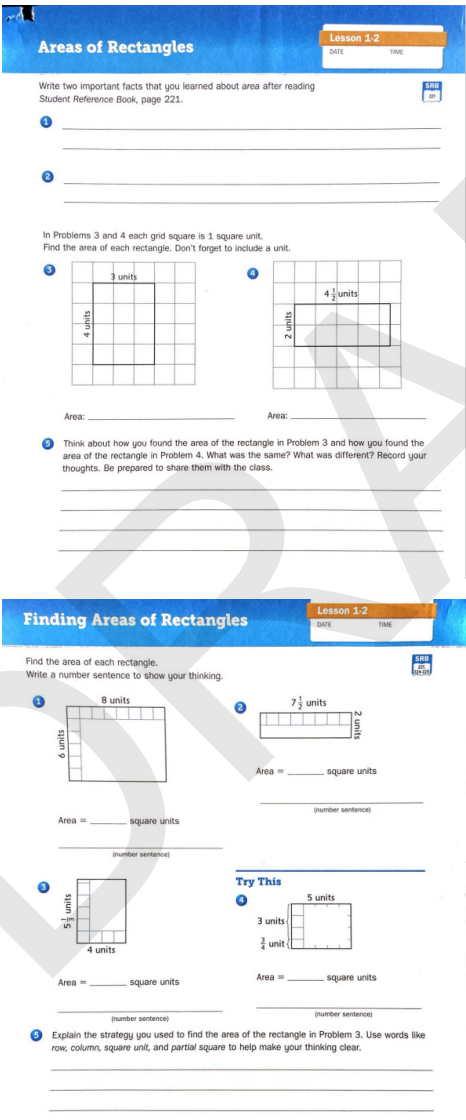
The above exhibit provides an illustration of the variance in the types of English language arts tasks analyzed by auditors. Overall, secondary English language arts artifacts required more writing tasks and opportunities for analysis, while elementary English language arts artifacts provided fewer opportunities for writing.



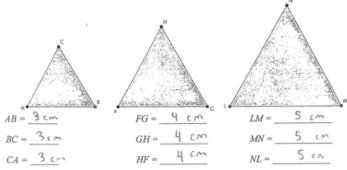
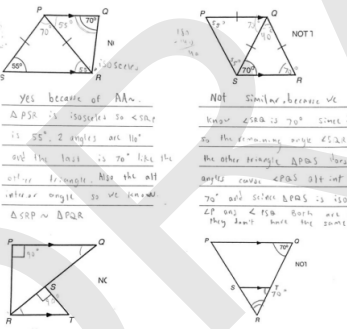
Westover Magnet kindergarten dance class

The following exhibit reports auditors’ analysis of higher-order thinking artifacts to the state standards for mathematics in grades 5 and 8. Auditors chose to present the artifacts in the following exhibit because they represent mathematics tasks that include written responses and higher-order thinking skills not found in most Stamford Public Schools mathematics artifacts.

**Exhibit 2.4.9: Alignment of Artifacts to State Standards Mathematics, Grades 5 and Geometry**

| Standard   | Artifact  | Alignment Analysis   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Mathematics, Grade 5</b>  |   |  |
| <p><b>5.NF.B.4:</b> Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication to multiply a fraction or whole number by a fraction</p> <p><b>5.NF.B.4b:</b> Find the area of a rectangle with fractional side lengths by tiling it with unit squares of the appropriate unit fraction side lengths and show that the area is the same as would be found by multiplying the side lengths. Multiply fractional side lengths to find areas of rectangles, and represent fraction products as rectangular areas</p> | <p><b>Find the area of the rectangle with fractional units and explain the process used to solve the problem</b></p>  | <p><b>Content: Topological Alignment</b></p> <p>The standard requires students to find the area of a rectangle with fractional lengths, building upon prior learned multiplication skills. This task presents rectangles with varying lengths, some with whole number and others with fractions, and students apply understanding of multiplication to find the area of the rectangle.</p> <p><b>Context: Deep Alignment</b></p> <p>In addition to finding the area of a rectangle with fractional side lengths, students explain how they solved the problem through a written response and share their process aloud through class discussion.</p> <p><b>Cognition: Deep Alignment</b></p> <p>The standard requires students to multiply fractions and find the area, both application tasks. This artifact extends beyond application through the written portion of the task when students explain their process and then compare and contrast the approaches they took for each respective problem. As students explain their thinking and compare their approaches, they are analyzing processes and evaluating the outcome.</p> |



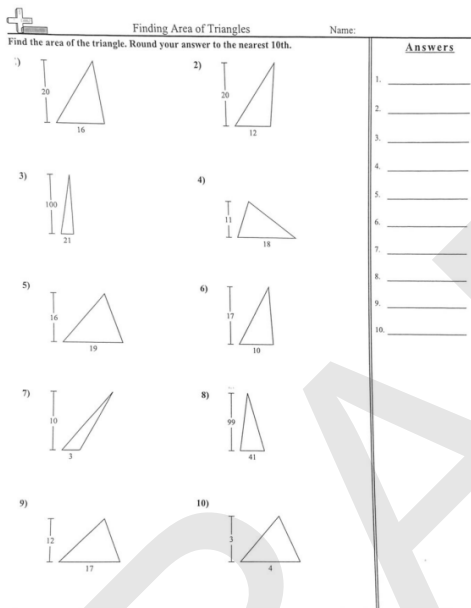
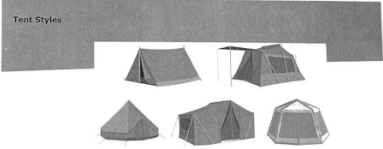
| Standard  | Artifact   | Alignment Analysis  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Mathematics, Geometry (High School)</b>  |  |   |
| <p><b>HSG-SRT.A.3.</b> Use the properties of similarity transformation to establish the AA criterion for two triangles to be similar</p> <p><b>HSG-SRT.B.5.</b> Use congruence and similarity criteria for triangles to solve problems and prove relationships in geometric figures</p> | <p><b>Analyze the relationships of geometric figures</b></p> <p>Thinking about Similar Triangles</p> <p>1. Measure the sides of the three triangles below (to the nearest 0.1 cm). Verify that the triangles are equilateral.</p>  <p>2. Take two of the triangles, say <math>\triangle ABC</math> and <math>\triangle PQR</math>. Are the pairs of corresponding sides proportional? Explain.</p> <p>3. Without measuring them, what can you say about the angles of these triangles? What two triangle theorems have we learned previously that can justify your conclusion?</p> <p>4. Make a conjecture: All equilateral triangles are _____.</p> <p>5. Prove your conjecture. (use a two column proof or a paragraph proof)</p> <p>Thinking about AA Similarity in Triangles</p> <p>Sometimes we are given "hidden" tools to help decide if triangles are similar. Think about those as you consider the following diagrams. Tell whether or not the triangles are similar and explain how you know. If they are, write a similarity statement. (The diagrams are not drawn to scale.)</p>  <p>Yes because of AA<br/> <math>\triangle PQR \sim \triangle ABC</math><br/>   is <math>90^\circ</math> &amp; angles are <math>110^\circ</math><br/>   and the last is <math>70^\circ</math> b/c the interior angle so we know<br/> <math>\triangle PQR \sim \triangle ABC</math></p> <p>Not similar because we know <math>\angle PQR</math> is <math>70^\circ</math> since it is interior to the triangle <math>\triangle PQR</math> because the other triangle <math>\triangle ABC</math> has an interior angle of <math>90^\circ</math> &amp; <math>70^\circ</math> and since <math>\triangle PQR</math> is <math>70^\circ</math> and <math>\triangle ABC</math> is <math>90^\circ</math> &amp; <math>70^\circ</math> they don't have the same angles.</p> <p>Yes because we have the right angle and all<br/> <math>\triangle RST \sim \triangle QPR</math></p> <p>Yes because similar triangles since we have <math>\parallel</math> lines <math>\angle Q</math> and <math>\angle R</math> are corresponding so both <math>70^\circ</math> also both have <math>\angle R</math>. If they have <math>\angle R</math> the same angle then this will also be the same<br/> <math>\triangle PQR \sim \triangle RST</math></p> | <p><b>Content: Topological Alignment</b></p> <p>Students are using properties of similarity transformations to determine if two triangles are similar. In addition, students are solving problems presented and proving these relationships through written explanations.</p> <p><b>Context: Deep Alignment</b></p> <p>The standards require students to establish criteria, solve, and prove relationships. This artifact requires students to do these standards-aligned tasks as well as make connections to prior learning and explain their thinking in writing, which extends beyond the requirements of the standards.</p> <p><b>Cognition: Deep Alignment</b></p> <p>The standards require students to use properties, establish criteria, solve problems, and prove relationships. This artifact engages students in the lower-ordering thinking skill of application and the higher-order thinking skills of analysis and evaluation. In addition to proving mathematically, students are required to prove how they know their answer through explanatory writing.</p> |

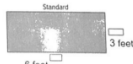
The above analysis illustrates atypical mathematics artifacts analyzed by auditors that required analysis of mathematical concepts. Overall, most mathematics artifacts were topologically aligned to the standards' content, context, and cognition and required the lower-order thinking skill of application.



The following exhibit reports auditors’ analysis of two grade 6 mathematics artifacts aligned to the same standard. The first artifact represents most mathematics artifacts analyzed by auditors in both elementary and secondary grade levels. The second artifact represents a higher-order, real-world task.

**Exhibit 2.4.10: Alignment of Artifacts to State Standards Mathematics, Grades 6 and Application/Real World**

| Standard   | Artifact   | Alignment Analysis   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Mathematics, Grade 6 Application Task</b>   |  |  |
| <p><b>6.G.A.1.</b> Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume</p> | <p><b>Solve to find the area of the triangle</b></p>  <p>The worksheet contains 10 problems for finding the area of triangles. Each problem shows a triangle with its base and height labeled. The problems are numbered 1 through 10. The answer key is provided on the right side of the worksheet.</p>  | <p><b>Content: Topological Alignment</b></p> <p>The standard requires students to find the area of triangles, quadrilaterals, and polygons by composing into rectangles or decomposing into triangles and other shapes. This artifact represents the early application of this standard: finding the area of the triangle. This is a foundational skill students must master before moving on to the more complex demands of the standard.</p> <p><b>Context: Topological Alignment</b></p> <p>Students are applying the skill of finding the area of a triangle through repeated practice on the worksheet.</p> <p><b>Cognition: Topological Alignment</b></p> <p>The standard requires students to solve the problem, and this artifact requires students to apply understanding of how to find the area of a triangle through repeatedly solving similar mathematical problems.</p> |
| <b>Mathematics, Grade 6 Real-World Task</b>  |  |  |
| <p><b>6.G.A.1.</b> Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume</p> | <p><b>Design a tent that will meet the space specifications provided</b></p> <p><b>Designing a Tent</b></p> <p><b>Situation/Problem:</b><br/>Have you ever been camping?</p> <p>You might know that sleeping bags are all about the same size, but tents come in a variety of shapes and sizes.</p> <p>Your task is to design a tent to accommodate up to four people, and estimate the amount of fabric needed to make your tent. Your design and estimate must be based on the information given and have mathematical justification.</p> <p>First, look at these examples of tents, the average specifications of a camping tent, and standard sleeping bag measurements. Work with a partner and discuss:</p> <p>Similarities and differences among the tents<br/>Information that will be important in your designing process<br/>The pros and cons of the various designs</p>  <p>The artifact includes a section titled 'Designing a Tent' with a situation/problem statement, instructions, and a list of questions to consider. It also features several illustrations of different tent styles, including a large rectangular tent, a small dome tent, a small A-frame tent, and a small tunnel tent.</p> | <p><b>Content: Deep Alignment</b></p> <p>The standard requires students to find the area of triangles, quadrilaterals, and polygons by composing into rectangles or decomposing into triangles and other shapes. This artifact requires students to apply their understanding of finding the area of geometric shapes by decomposing shapes into rectangles and triangles, developing a plan to create a tent with enough space to accommodate people and gear with the specifications provided, and evaluate the resulting product.</p>   |

| Standard  | Artifact   | Alignment Analysis   |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |
|---|--|--|----------------|-------|----------------|--------|---|-----------------|--------|--|----------------|--------|--|-----------------|--------|---|----------------|--------|--|---|---|-------------|-------------|---|
|   | <p>(Continued)</p> <p><b>Tent Height Specifications</b></p> <table><thead><tr><th>Height Description</th><th>Height of Tent</th><th>Notes</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>sitting height</td><td>3 feet</td><td>Campers are able to sit, lie, or crawl inside tent.</td></tr><tr><td>kneeling height</td><td>4 feet</td><td>Campers are able to kneel inside tent. Found mainly in 3- to 4-person tents.</td></tr><tr><td>sloping height</td><td>5 feet</td><td>Campers are able to move around on their feet inside tent, but most campers will not be able to stand upright.</td></tr><tr><td>standing height</td><td>6 feet</td><td>Most adult campers are able to stand upright inside tent.</td></tr><tr><td>roaming height</td><td>7 feet</td><td>Adult campers are able to stand upright and walk around inside tent.</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><b>Sleeping Bag Measurements</b></p>  <p><b>To Be Submitted:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Planning Sheet (Attached in packet)</li><li>A list of the final design of the tent with labels of measurements</li><li>A summary of why you chose the tent design that you did<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>This should include the space you needed</li><li>Why you chose a specific height</li><li>Any other relevant information</li></ol></li></ol> <p><b>Tent Design</b> Activity Master 61191</p> <p>How many people can sleep in your tent? _____. What is the height of your tent? _____</p> <table><thead><tr><th>Sketch the bottom panel of your tent and the locations where sleeping bags will go.</th><th>Sketch the overall design of your tent.</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td><div></div></td><td><div></div></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>What decisions are important when choosing a tent design?</p> <p>Use the remaining space to show any work (sketches of side panels, calculations, etc) needed to estimate the amount of fabric that will be necessary to make your tent.</p> | Height Description   | Height of Tent | Notes | sitting height | 3 feet | Campers are able to sit, lie, or crawl inside tent. | kneeling height | 4 feet | Campers are able to kneel inside tent. Found mainly in 3- to 4-person tents. | sloping height | 5 feet | Campers are able to move around on their feet inside tent, but most campers will not be able to stand upright. | standing height | 6 feet | Most adult campers are able to stand upright inside tent. | roaming height | 7 feet | Adult campers are able to stand upright and walk around inside tent. | Sketch the bottom panel of your tent and the locations where sleeping bags will go. | Sketch the overall design of your tent. | <div></div> | <div></div> | <p>(Continued)</p> <p><b>Context: Topological Alignment</b></p> <p>The standard requires students to solve real-world problems, and this artifact represents a real-world context in which students may apply area, surface area, and volume.</p> <p><b>Cognition: Deep Alignment</b></p> <p>In addition to solving problems through application of geometry knowledge and skills, students are creating a tent from size specifications and other criteria provided. Students will solve, create, and evaluate their tents to ensure they meet specifications and can accommodate the number of inhabitants.</p> |
| Height Description  | Height of Tent   | Notes  |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |
| sitting height  | 3 feet   | Campers are able to sit, lie, or crawl inside tent.  |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |
| kneeling height   | 4 feet   | Campers are able to kneel inside tent. Found mainly in 3- to 4-person tents.                                   |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |
| sloping height  | 5 feet   | Campers are able to move around on their feet inside tent, but most campers will not be able to stand upright. |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |
| standing height   | 6 feet   | Most adult campers are able to stand upright inside tent.  |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |
| roaming height  | 7 feet   | Adult campers are able to stand upright and walk around inside tent.   |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |
| Sketch the bottom panel of your tent and the locations where sleeping bags will go. | Sketch the overall design of your tent.  |  |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |
| <div></div>   | <div></div>  |  |                |       |                |        |   |                 |        |  |                |        |  |                 |        |   |                |        |  |   |   |             |             |   |

The above illustrates two mathematics artifacts analyzed by auditors that were aligned to the same standard but approached the learning task in very different ways. The first artifact presented problems on a worksheet, and students repeatedly solved the same type of problem. The second artifact required students to apply their mathematical skills to a real-world problem using higher-order thinking skills.

## Summary

Auditors analyzed 1,606 artifacts provided by building principals and district leaders for content, cognition, and context. Most examined artifacts were on grade level, but many required lower-order thinking in the form of classroom context tasks for the elementary grades. Secondary grade artifacts required more high-order thinking skills, but in the form of less engaging classroom contexts. Auditors examined selected artifacts for their alignment to standards (topological and/or deep alignment) and found most to be aligned to standards, with one being inadequately aligned (see **Recommendation 2**).

DRAFT

# FOCUS AREA THREE: The School District Demonstrates Internal Consistency and Rational Equity in Its Program Development and Implementation.

A school system meeting this Curriculum Audit™ focus area is able to show how its program has been created as the result of a systematic identification of deficiencies in the achievement and growth of its students compared to measurable standards of pupil learning.

In addition, a school system meeting this focus area is able to demonstrate that it possesses a focused and coherent approach toward defining curriculum and that, as a whole, it is more effective than the sum of its parts, i.e., any arbitrary combinations of programs or schools do not equate to the larger school system entity.

The purpose of having a school system is to obtain the educational and economic benefits of a coordinated and focused program for students, both to enhance learning, which is complex and multi-year in its dimensions, and to employ economies of scale where applicable.

## What the Auditors Expected to Find in the Stamford Public Schools:

**Focus Area Three: Consistency and Equity**  
Under Focus Area Three, auditors review the design and delivery of the educational program to determine equity, connectivity, and overall alignment. A successful school system meeting Focus Area Three will demonstrate a highly-developed, articulated, and coordinated curriculum (programs and services) in the organization that is effectively monitored by the administrative and supervisory staffs at the central and site levels.

### Common indicators

- Documents/sources that reveal internal connections at different levels in the system;
- Predictable consistency through a coherent rationale for content delineation within the curriculum;
- Equality of curriculum/course access and opportunity;
- Allocation of resource flow to areas of greatest need;
- Operations set within a framework that carries out the system’s goals and objectives;
- Specific professional development programs to enhance curricular delivery and equip personnel to participate in its design and development;
- A curriculum that is monitored by central office and site supervisory personnel; and
- Teacher and administrator responsiveness to school board policies, currently and over time.

## Overview of What the Auditors Found in the Stamford Public Schools:

This section is an overview of the findings that follow in the area of **Focus Area Three**. Details follow within separate findings.

Auditors visited over 300 classrooms in the district and found that the majority of instruction occurring was large group, teacher-centered direct instruction. Classroom activities are largely at a low-cognitive level of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Since there is no consistent district plan for monitoring classroom instruction, campuses design their own monitoring systems and focus based on individual campus initiatives.

Professional development in SPS lacks the guidance and path of a comprehensive district plan. Many professional development opportunities are provided for staff; however, the training is mostly entrusted to the building level. There is no district oversight to assess the impact of professional development on teaching or student learning.

Stamford Public Schools has an equity policy but is lacking strategies to operationalize the policy directives. Professional development on equity and cultural understanding at both the district and building levels needs to be reinforced. Attendance/suspension rates are disproportionate to the representation of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students, with Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students having higher percentages in both absences and suspensions than their populations of students in the district.

**Finding 3.1: Board policy sets expectations for instructional delivery and monitoring of instruction, but the expectations are not being implemented. Commonly accepted effective instructional practices known to impact student learning were not consistently evident during observed classroom activities and monitoring of instruction is not aligned across the district.**

### **Classroom Instruction**

High quality classroom instruction is key to a district's capacity to positively influence student achievement and bridge achievement gaps across ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. Diversity in approaches to the delivery of curriculum and the consistent use of research-based instructional strategies, active student engagement, and varied cognitive types promote increased student achievement for all students. The utilization of a variety of strategies assists teachers in meeting the various needs and learning styles of students, as they effectively deliver the curriculum. Employing effective strategies and activities in the classroom serves to motivate students, facilitate challenging learning, and encourage students to think critically. District and campus administrators are responsible for determining and communicating the desired classroom practices for quality instruction and then monitoring that instruction to ensure effective implementation. Effective school systems communicate basic expectations for instructional strategies and develop the skills of both teachers and administrative staff in identifying and utilizing successful research-based activities that engage students in learning. In addition, district and campus leaders support and monitor the implementation of expected teaching practices and activities in the delivery of the curriculum and synthesize the information in continuous individual and campus improvement efforts. This finding examines the instructional strategies utilized in the district along with how the system monitors what is happening in its classrooms.

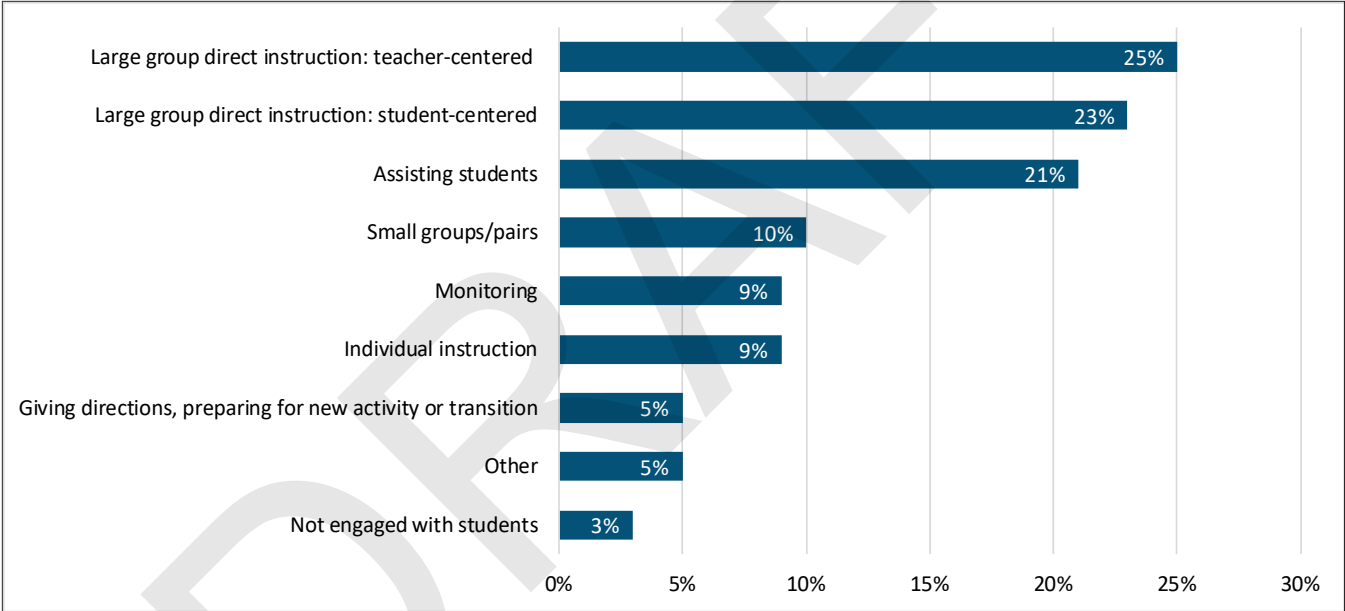
To determine the expectations for classroom practices and instructional monitoring in Stamford Public Schools, auditors also examined board policy, job descriptions, district and campus documents, teacher and principal surveys, and curriculum related documents to determine if district expectations for instructional practices and monitoring were present. They also conducted interviews with board members, community partners, district and campus administrators, and campus-based personnel.

As referenced in **Finding 1.1**, *Board Policy 6121* provides guidance on instructional practices and curriculum monitoring. The policy states that "instructional practices must be rigorous and designed to promote active engagement of all learners" and that "curriculum monitoring is a shared responsibility among district staff, principals, assistant principals, and teachers themselves in grade-level or department meetings and PLCs". The policy clearly states that principals and assistant principals are the key leaders and participants for curriculum monitoring, and should visit classrooms at least once weekly to become familiar with curriculum implementation and support teachers as needs are identified.



The auditors visited all campuses to observe instruction and learning in a variety of classrooms. During the 317 classroom visits, auditors recorded and categorized their observations. The data gathered from the classroom observations provide a “snapshot” view of instruction during the observation period. Classroom visits were made during various times of the school day and instructional period. The data are not intended to be evaluative, but rather reflect what was observed to compare with district expectations for instructional practices. In addition to classroom observation data, auditors also examined samples of student work as an additional data source representing the type of activities and learning that students engage in. Information on student artifacts is presented in **Finding 2.4**. Auditors observed and recorded data in all classrooms related to clear and evident learning objectives, student orientation to the work, student arrangement, dominant student activities, dominant teacher activities, predominant cognitive levels according to Bloom, evidence of high yield instructional strategies, and evidence of differentiation. Auditors also recorded the presence and activities of paraprofessionals as well as technology use level as determined by SAMR. Descriptions of each of the items that auditors used in their observations are shared in **Appendix D**.

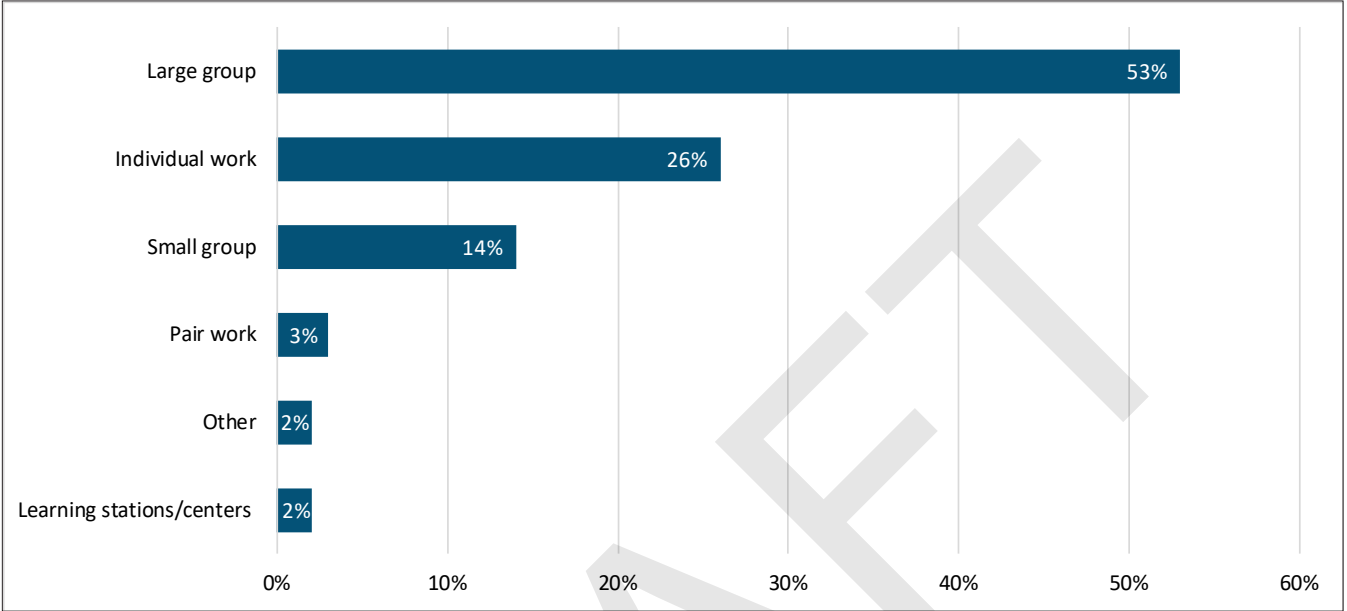
**Exhibit 3.1.1: Dominant Teacher Activity**



As presented in the exhibit above, the dominant teacher activity was teacher-centered, large group direct instruction (25%) followed by student-centered, large group direct instruction (23%). Teachers were also frequently observed assisting students (21%). Teachers were less likely to be observed working with small groups or pairs (10%), monitoring students (9%) or providing individual instruction (9%).

In the following exhibit, auditors found that students in observed classrooms were most commonly arranged in a large group (53%) which is consistent with the dominance of large-group instruction observed by teachers.

**Exhibit 3.1.2: Dominant Student Arrangement**



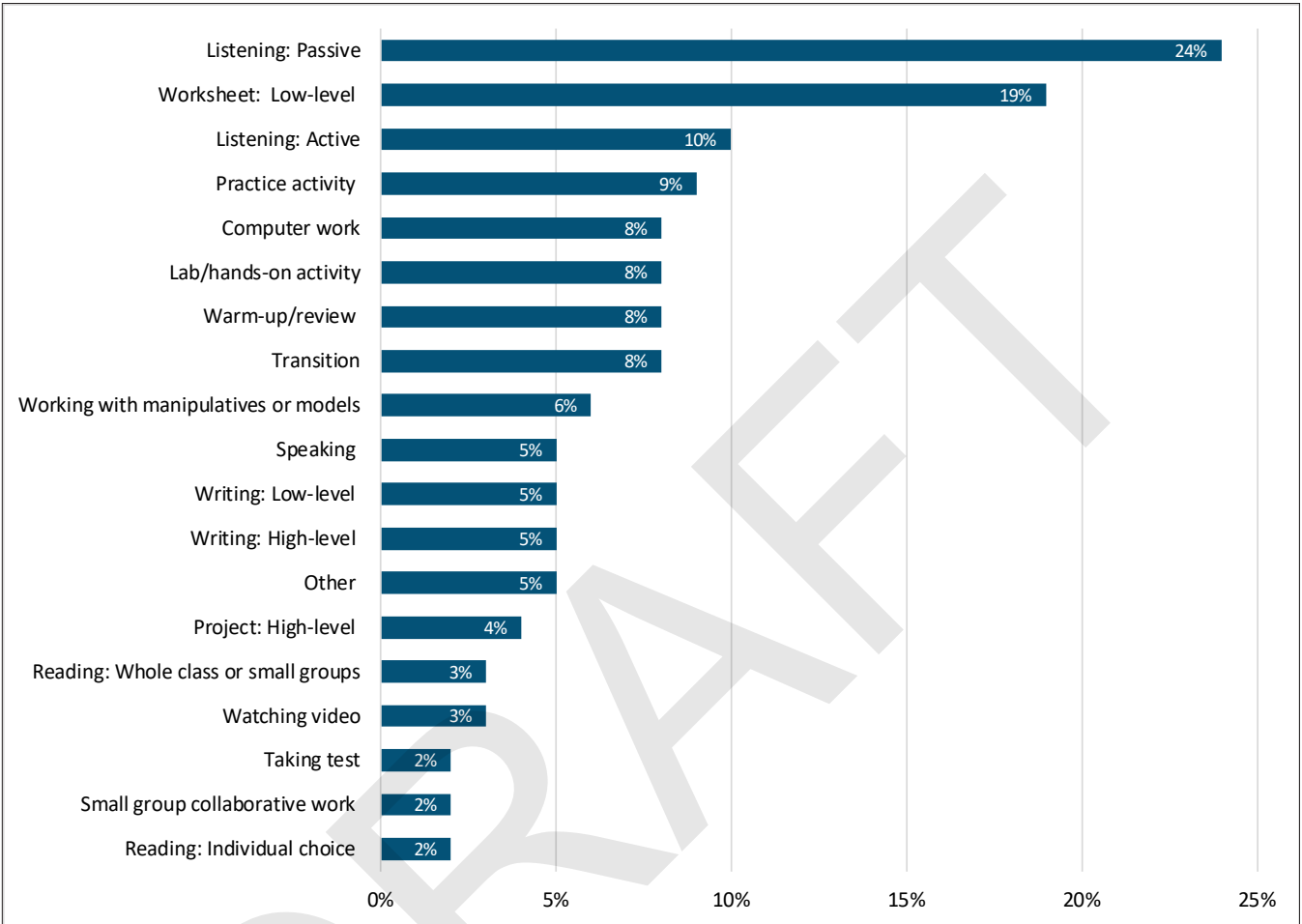
In 26% of classrooms observed, students were working individually, and in 14% of classrooms, students were working in small groups. In the remaining classrooms, students were working in pairs (3%), at learning stations/ centers (2%), or in a combination of arrangements (2%).



*Westover Magnet small group*

The following exhibit displays the predominant student activities observed by auditors during classroom visits.

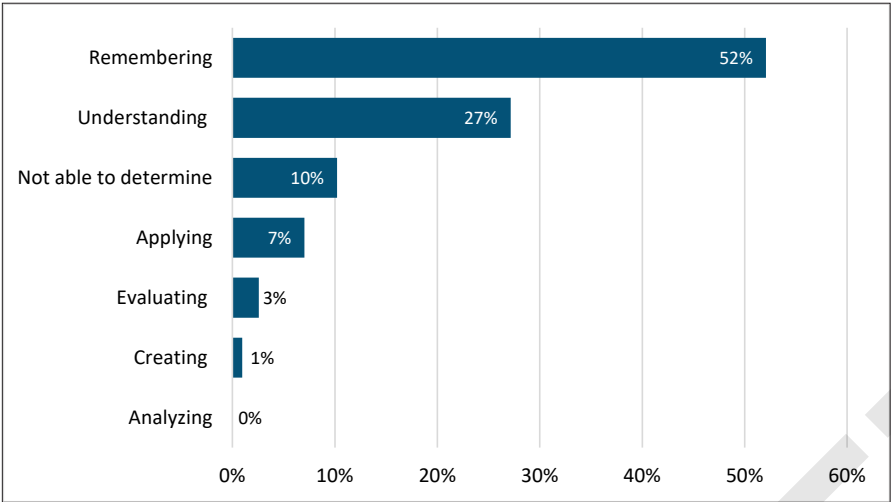
**Exhibit 3.1.3: Dominant Student Activity**



Auditors also recorded what students were doing during the classroom observations. As presented in the exhibit below, students were often observed listening: Listening passively in 24% of classrooms, and listening actively in 10% of classrooms. In 19% of classrooms, auditors observed students completing low-level worksheet activities. Practice activities, computer work , lab or hands-on activity, warm-up or review and transitions were observed in 8 to 9% of classrooms. Students were less likely to be observed writing or reading.

During classroom visits, auditors looked for the cognitive level students were expected to use to complete the assigned work. Auditors used Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy to capture classroom observations of student learning activities (see **Appendix D**). The following exhibit summarizes the cognitive types observed.

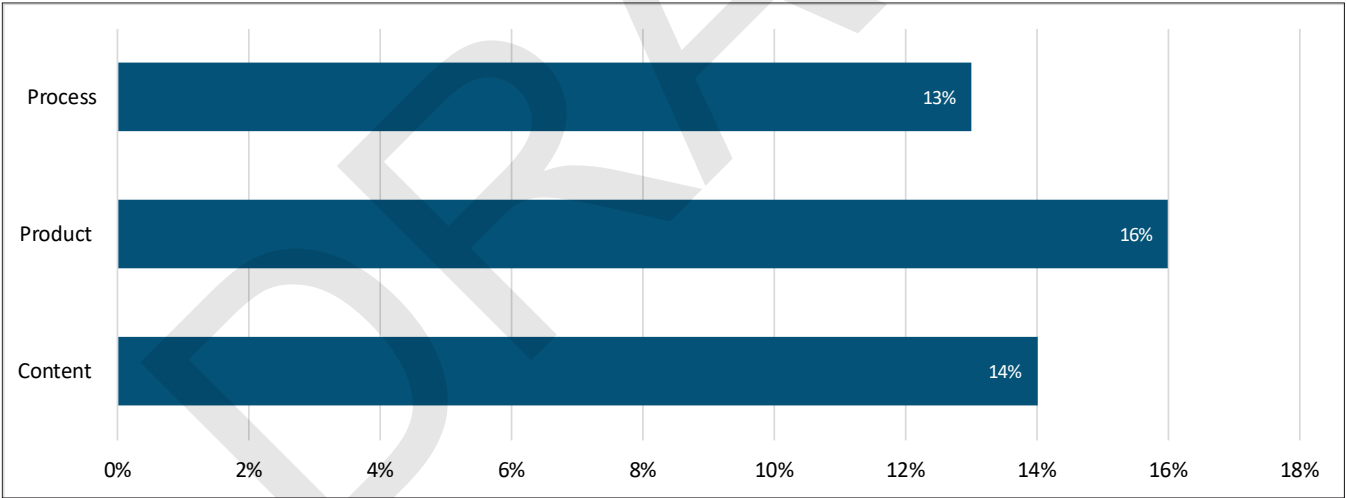
**Exhibit 3.1.4: Observed Student Cognitive Types, PK-12**



The majority of student activities observed (79%) were at the low cognitive levels of remembering and understanding. Only 4% of observed activities required higher-level cognitive processes of evaluating or creating.

During classroom observations, auditors recorded the presence of differentiation in process, product and/ or content. Differentiating instruction is the process of adjusting and modifying what skills and concepts students learn (content), what materials they use to learn concepts (process), and/or how their learning is produced and assessed (product), based on the types of differentiation in each classroom, so observations do not add to 100%.

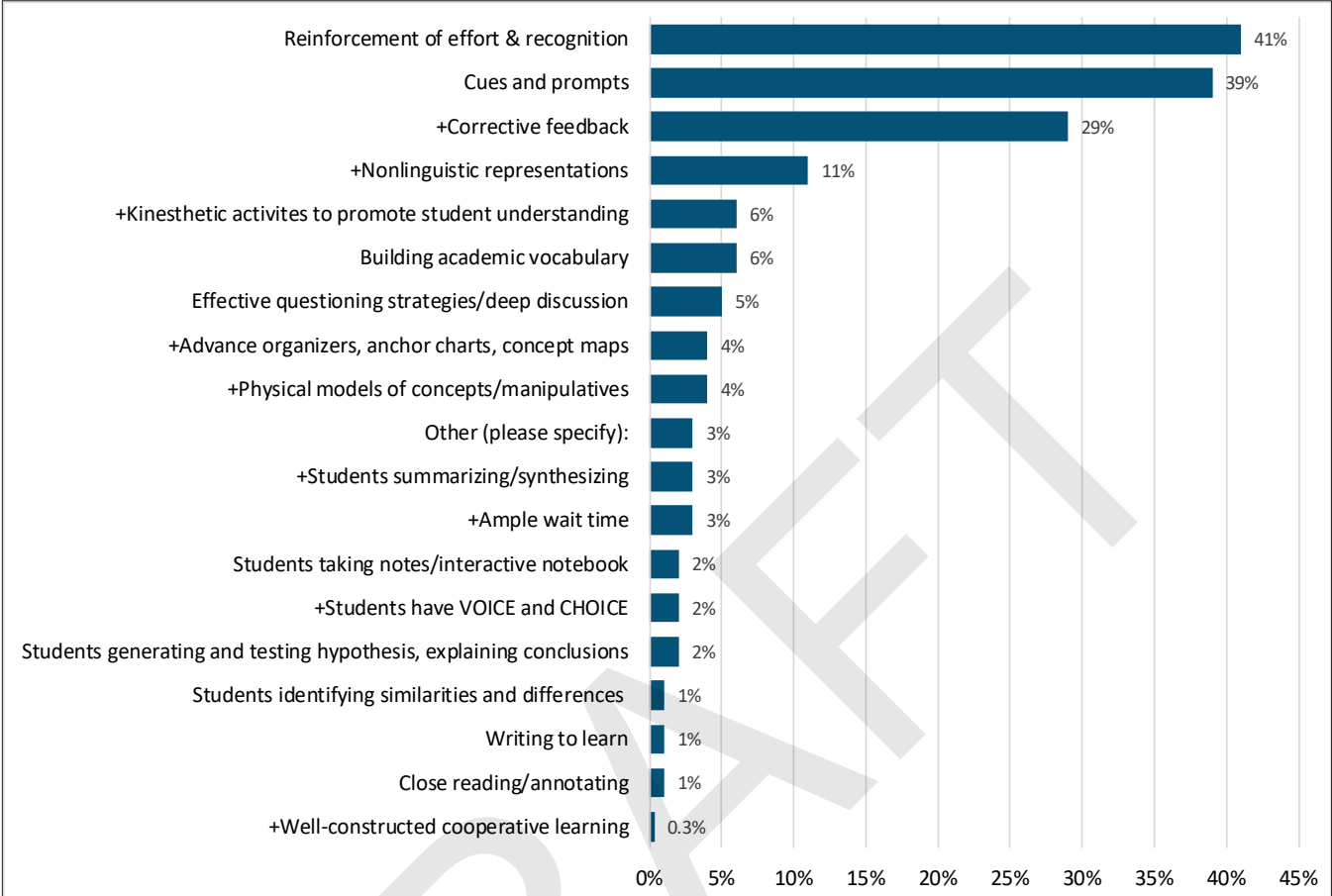
**Exhibit 3.1.5: Evidence of Differentiation in Process, Product, or Content, PK-12**



As shown in this exhibit, auditors observed differentiation of product in 16% of classrooms observed; differentiation in content in 14% of classrooms; and differentiation in process in 13% of classrooms.

Auditors also recorded information regarding the use of effective instructional strategies (see **Recommendation 2** for a description of effective strategies). A summary of the effective instructional strategies observed is presented in the following exhibit.

**Exhibit 3.1.6: Use of Effective Instructional Strategies, PK-12**



Key: + = High yield strategies

Auditors could observe multiple effective instructional strategies in each classroom, so observations do not add to 100%. The most commonly observed effective instructional strategy was reinforcement of effort and recognition (41%), followed by cues and prompts (39%). Teachers were also likely to be observed providing students with corrective feedback (29%).

Auditors also collected information on the presence of learning objectives in classrooms. The auditors identified content learning objectives (stated or written) in 37% of observed classrooms, but the objectives were determined to be specific enough give the student information of what mastery looks like in only 8% of classrooms. Paraprofessionals were observed in 21% of classrooms, and were most often supporting an individual student (34%) or sitting in the room not engaged with students (25%).

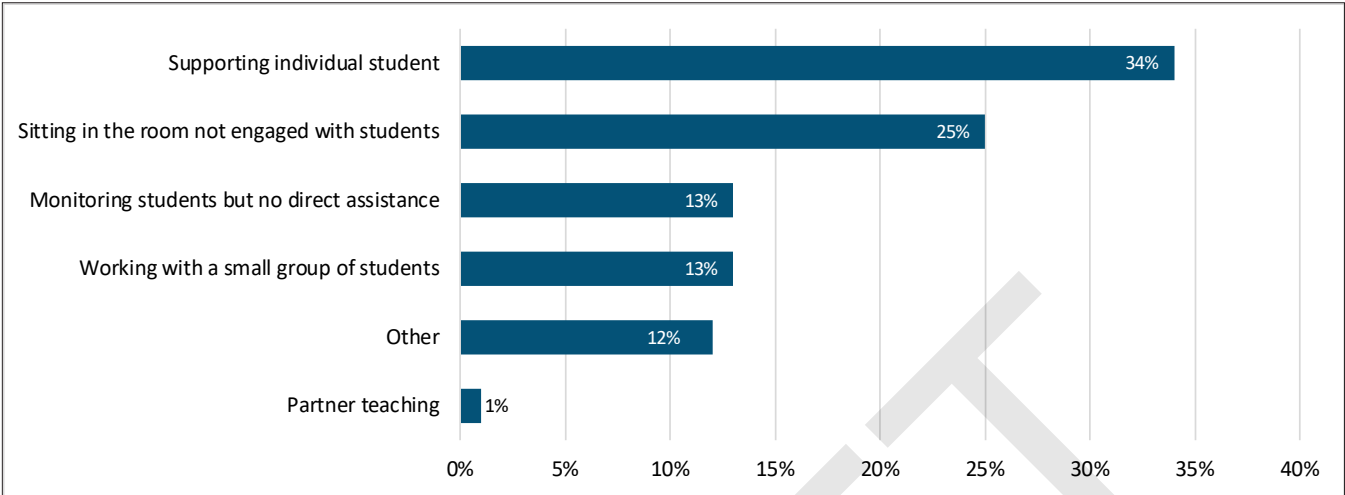
Additionally, auditors collected information regarding the main paraprofessional activity in observed classrooms. Auditors' observations of paraprofessional activities are summarized in the following exhibit.



*Strawberry Hill math instruction with lap boards*



**Exhibit 3.1.7: Paraprofessional Activity (when present), PK-12**



Paraprofessionals were observed in 21% of classrooms, and were most often supporting an individual student (34%) or sitting in the room not engaged with students (25%). Finally, auditors observed technology usage in observed classrooms. Technology was in use by students in 43% of observed classrooms. When students were using technology, it was typically to complete practice or workbook activities (57%). Auditors did observe students using technology to create products in 11% of the classrooms where students were using technology. Auditors observed technology in use by teachers in 64% of the observed classrooms and recorded the level of technology use as determined by the SAMR model. Technology should be seamlessly integrated into lesson design to enhance the learning. The SAMR model is used as a guide to the level of technology integration. Technology integration is considered as a continuum—moving from substitution to redefinition of classroom activity (see **Appendix D** for a description of the SAMR model). The majority of technology usage by teachers observed in SPS was at the substitution level (87%).

In interviews with auditors and responses to survey questions, district and building administrators reflected that there are no clear expectations regarding instructional practices or monitoring of the delivery of instruction.

- “We have no specific requirements or teaching models.” (District Administrator)
- “The evaluation process is not tied to any delivery expectation.” (Building Administrator)
- “Some principals let teachers do whatever.” (Building Administrator)

**Instructional Monitoring**

Auditors used teachers’ survey responses and information from district and building administrator interviews to compare instructional monitoring practices with district expectations. Per policy, district staff are responsible for providing lists of instructional ‘look fors’ which building leadership are expected to use during “at least weekly” informal classroom visits.

Auditors found that there was no consistent process used in classroom observations, and that while building administrators are visiting classrooms, they are not doing so with the expected frequency. Only 25% of surveyed teachers reported that their building administrator visited their classroom at least weekly.

Comments from district personnel and teachers reflect variation in the expectations of frequency of monitoring.

- “Principals are not required to visit classroom regularly. We would like to see it daily.” (District Administrator)
- “[Building administrators are in my classroom] about one time weekly.” (Teacher)
- “Outside of agreed upon evaluation times- visitations don't happen.” (Teacher)

Many building administrators indicated that they monitor instructional delivery on their campuses as much as possible, but have difficulties performing this function due to time constraints. Special education responsibilities were noted by building administrators as a primary barrier to monitoring.

- “I am pulled from visiting any classrooms two full days a week because I am the designated special education administrator. This added responsibility has hampered my ability to be an effective instructional leader.
- “Special ed needs have taken a toll on the building. It's dire and I'm not sure there is a clear understanding of how the domino effect.”
- “Responsibilities, initiatives, increase in discipline, SEL needs, special education responsibilities prohibit visiting classrooms as often as I would like.”

Overall, auditors observed a lack of consistency across the district with regard to instructional expectations and expectations around the frequency of classroom visits. Principals and assistant principals are visiting classrooms and monitoring teacher performance, but additional responsibilities reduce the frequency of observations of teachers delivering instruction.

### Summary

In summary, although board policy sets expectations for the effective delivery and monitoring of instruction, data collected by auditors reflect that these expectations are not being implemented in classrooms in Stamford Public Schools. There is no clear guidance from the district regarding either the delivery of instruction or the practices for monitoring instruction. Data collected by auditors during classroom visits indicated that a limited range of instructional strategies and effective student learning activities are utilized. Auditors found instructional practices to be predominantly large group and that student work is predominately at the low cognitive levels of remembering and understanding.

Campuses design their own monitoring systems and instructional focus. Principals and assistant principals are visiting classrooms and monitoring teacher performance as they can, but additional responsibilities and meetings lead to limited opportunities to observe teachers delivering instruction. There is a lack of focus and consistency across the district with regard to expectations and frequency of classroom visits.

In order to meet the needs of all students in the Stamford Public Schools, district leadership must review current expectations for effective instructional delivery and monitoring, and revise as needed. These expectations must be communicated clearly and coordinated across all campuses. See **Recommendation 2** for clear action steps in developing and implementing such a system.

**Finding 3.2: Professional development in Stamford Public Schools needs the direction and oversight of a comprehensive plan. The district offers many professional development opportunities for staff; however, the training is mostly entrusted to the building level. There is no district oversight to monitor for its impact on student learning.**

Professional development is the primary means for a district to improve teacher effectiveness and attain the overall goal of increased student achievement. An effective professional development program is guided by a comprehensive, long-range plan that provides all instructional staff with the knowledge and skills to deliver the district curriculum. Coordination of the district plan with school plans that are linked to identified needs, as evidenced by student assessment data, builds teacher and administrator capacity resulting in higher levels of student learning.

The district presented the auditors with the following documents directing professional development: 2020-21 and 2021-22 District Strategic Improvement Plans, and 2020-21 and 2021-22 Elementary, Middle, and High School Improvement Plans. These documents listed the professional development days, topics, the district goal, and whether the professional development was district or building based.

Job descriptions were also presented for review and most made reference to professional development responsibilities.

While *Board Policy* 4001 (see **Finding 1.1**) requires that “all staff should have the opportunity to participate in programs designed by the superintendent to enhance their professional development,” there is no expectation for planning or for monitoring the effectiveness of the professional development activities and no connection to the curriculum.

None of the above documents singly constitute a professional development plan. As a group, they do provide some components of professional development planning and were used for the following analysis.

To determine the adequacy and effectiveness of professional development in Stamford Public Schools, the auditors used audit criteria to rate the adequacy of policy, planning and design, delivery, and assessment of professional development.

The exhibit below provides the 18 characteristics recommended for a high-quality professional development plan. Each characteristic is rated relative to policy, planning and design, delivery, and evaluation support.

**Exhibit 3.2.1: Curriculum Management Improvement Model (CMIM) Professional Development Characteristics and Auditors’ Assessment of Staff Development Program and Planning**

| Characteristics   | Auditors’ Rating |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Policy</b>   |                  |
| 1. Has policy that establishes the expectation that professional development focus primarily on the improved delivery of curriculum | P*               |
| 2. Fosters an expectation for professional growth and requires planning to support growth, for the improvement of student learning  |                  |
| 3. Is for all employees   | X                |

| Characteristics   | Auditors' Rating |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Planning and Design</b>  |                  |
| 4. Is based on a careful analysis of data and is data-driven  |                  |
| 5. Provides for system-wide coordination and has a clearinghouse function in place  |                  |
| 6. Has a current plan that provides a framework for integrating initiatives in professional development with the mission, vision, and curriculum implementation                       |                  |
| 7. Has a professional development mission in place  |                  |
| 8. Is built using a long-range planning approach  |                  |
| 9. Provides for organizational, unit, and individual development in a systemic manner   |                  |
| 10. Focuses on organizational change—professional development efforts are aligned to district goals   | P*               |
| <b>Delivery</b>   |                  |
| 11. Is based on proven research-based approaches that have been shown to increase productivity  |                  |
| 12. Provides for three phases of the change process: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization   |                  |
| 13. Is based on human learning and development and adult learning research  |                  |
| 14. Uses a variety of professional development approaches   |                  |
| 15. Provides for follow-up coaching and on-the-job application, which are necessary to ensure change in practice  |                  |
| 16. Expects each supervisor to be a staff developer of staff supervised   | X                |
| <b>Evaluation and Support</b>   |                  |
| 17. Provides the necessary funding to carry out professional development goals  | P*               |
| 18. Requires an evaluation of process that is ongoing, includes multiple sources of information, focuses on all levels of the organization, and is based on actual change in behavior |                  |
| <b>Total Met</b>  | <b>2/18</b>      |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>   | <b>11%</b>       |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met  |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.  |                  |
| ©2021 CMSI  |                  |

As shown in the exhibit above, professional development programming meets two of the 18 characteristics. Each of the four subcategories is discussed below.

### Policy (Characteristics 1-3)

*Board Policy 4001: Professional Development* is vague in setting the direction for professional development, it provides no focus on the delivery of curriculum or expectation for planning or evaluation of effectiveness on student learning. However, it sets the expectation that professional development is for all staff (see **Finding 1.1**).

### Planning and Design (Characteristics 4-10)

There is no indication that data are used at the district level to drive the development of the professional development program. While system-wide coordinated professional development does not exist in Stamford Public Schools, there is still professional development provided to staff primarily at the building level; as one administrator explained, “Professional development is basically school based. There is no district plan for professional development.”

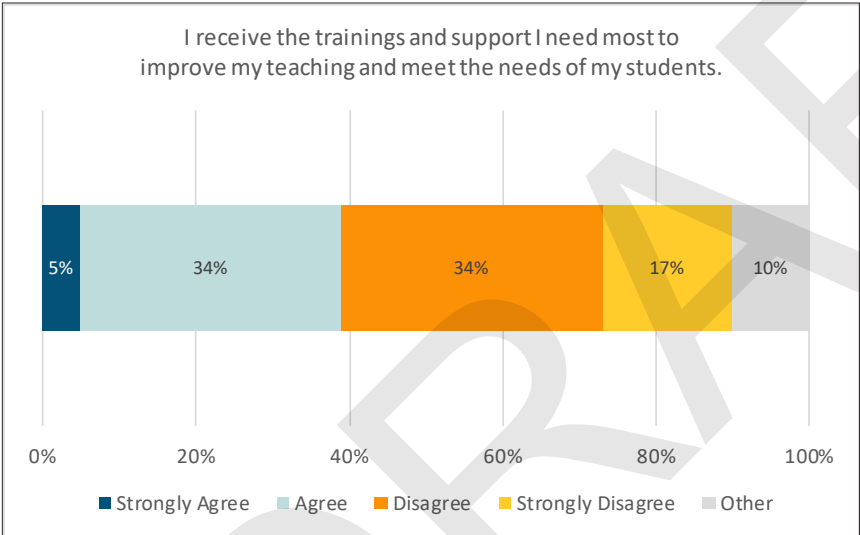
The district and school improvement plans listed a variety of staff development topics. Auditors were not presented with a professional development plan hence there is no mission in place for professional development.

While professional development is mentioned in documents, there is no framework or long-range planning approach that includes any type of plan for the coordination of professional development at the district level. Since no comprehensive professional development plan was provided to auditors, there is no evidence that supports or provides direction for organizational, unit, or individual professional development, furthermore there is no plan in place to ensure the alignment of all professional development to district goals.

The auditors also found that even though some professional development efforts are based on district goals, the degree of alignment of all organizational professional development efforts to district goals is partially evident. There is no district-wide professional development plan in place to ensure the alignment of all professional development to district goals.

Teachers were asked if they receive the training and support most needed to improve their teaching.

**Exhibit 3.2.2: Teachers’ Responses to Training and Support Most Needed to Improve their Teaching, through a Survey**



As shown in this exhibit 39% of teachers agree or strongly agree that their professional development needs to improve their teaching are being met, while 51% disagree or strongly disagree. This suggests that the professional development needs of over half the teachers are not being met.

**Delivery (Characteristics 11-16)**

Auditors did not find evidence in five of the characteristics recommended for delivery of high-quality professional development. Evidence of characteristic 16 was found in supervisor job descriptions which set an expectation that each supervisor to be a staff developer of staff supervised.

**Evaluation and Support (Characteristics 17-18)**

Building Administrators provided information through a survey about the adequacy of funding for professional development and its availability to support teachers in improving instruction to meet diverse student needs.

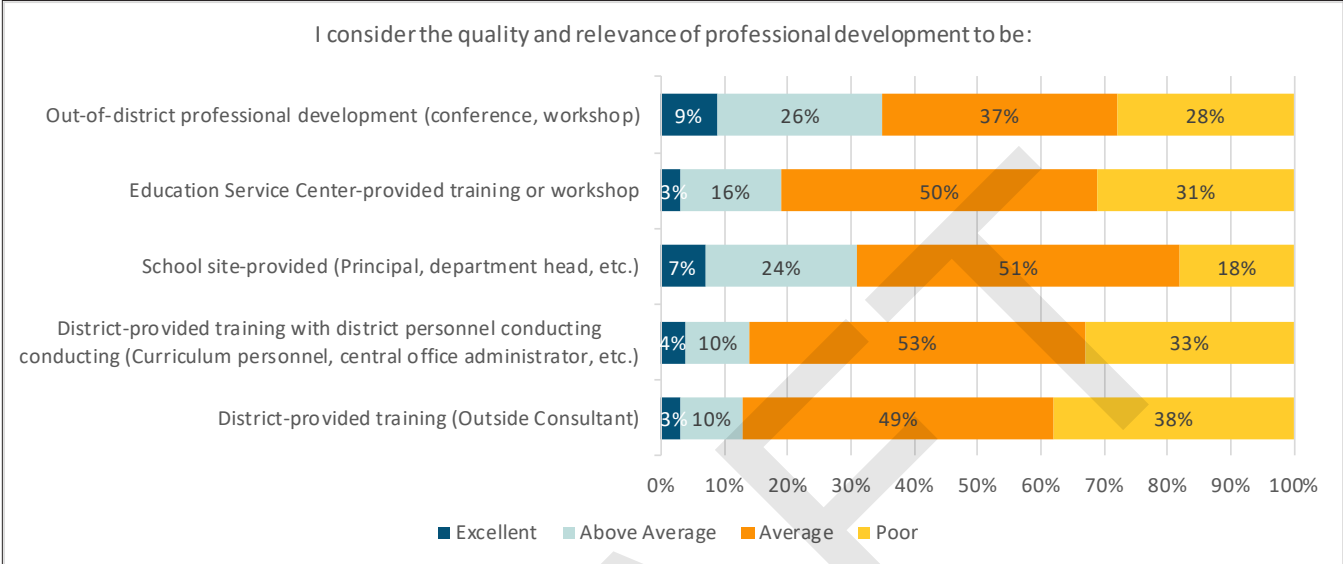
Fifty-five percent of building administrators agree that adequate funding is provided to support teachers in improving instruction, while 45% disagree or strongly disagree. However, the district did not present auditors with a professional development budget, and neither is the budget detailed in any of building improvement plans where professional development activities are described.

Auditors were not provided with any information to support the evaluation of professional development and its potential impact on student learning. Evaluation is generally completions data: dates, topics, and locations. A board member made the following reference to efficacy of professional development, “There seems to be a stalling effect with professional development. The board approves requests for professional development, but we don’t seem to be moving where we need to be.”



Teachers were also asked to rate the quality of professional development provided by outside consultants, district personnel, school site personnel, education service center, or out-of-district as excellent, above average, average, or poor.

**Exhibit 3.2.3: Teacher Perception of the Quality and Relevance of Professional Development**



The exhibit shows that teachers rated the out-of-district professional development the highest with 9% excellent, 26% above average, 37% average, and 28% poor. School site-provided training was also rated higher with 7% excellent, 24% above average, 51% average, and 18% poor. The lowest rated professional development was district-provided training conducted by outside consultants with 3% excellent, 10% above average, 49% average, and 38% poor. Whatever the source of professional development, the quality and relevance are mostly regarded as average and above average.

**Summary**

The professional development program at Stamford Public Schools meets two of the 18 characteristics expected for a high-quality professional development plan. The district needs a comprehensive professional development plan for system-wide coordination. A policy for professional development exists but is vague at specifying the requirements for a comprehensive program.

Professional development is provided at the district and building level. Principals are mostly free to determine the professional development they feel is necessary for their campus with no evidence of the use of data or a needs assessment, although campus professional development plans are connected to district goals. There is a clear commitment by the district to provide professional development and to involve as many people as are willing to participate, but there is no coordinated approach for ensuring its benefits or evidence it is helping the district achieve the academic and social emotional goals for its students. Auditors were not presented with any documentation of evaluation of professional development other than completion data (see **Recommendation 4**).

**Finding 3.3: While an equity policy exists to address unmet learning needs of certain populations of students, disproportionate opportunities remain as barriers to academic achievement across all categories of at-risk students for certain student groups in Stamford Public Schools.**

A high performing school system is committed to success for all learners and underpins that commitment with controls and action. Written policies and procedures guide decisions that provide all students with equal opportunity and equitable support to achieve intended outcomes. Fairness to all students is promoted through access to a quality curriculum and programs with proportionate representation, needed human and financial resources, and a quality learning environment. None of these depend on the student's family economics, gender, ethnicity, disability, or English language proficiency.

The term equal means "exactly the same," and the audit considers a lack of equal access to programs and services as an inequality. Equity is the allocation of resources based on need with the intent to "level the playing field" for all learners. Equity also refers to the principle of "consideration of various differences" and is necessary to establish fairness for certain groups, including special education and English language learners (ELL) students. If an opportunity or resource for specific student groups and regular education students is the same, but the need for the student groups is greater to effectively meet their educational needs, the equality becomes an inequity.

Inequality and inequity can be manifestations of design or delivery. For example, an inequality or inequity promulgated by statute or policy is considered a design impediment. One created through practice, typically via institutional slippage (gradually occurring without notice or malice) is considered a delivery obstruction. Design and delivery barriers can be equally devastating to the success of all students, especially those students who require additional services to be successful in school. Therefore, districts must be proactive to prevent as well as reactive to remove barriers to equality and equity.

Auditors reviewed district policies and documents, interviewed administrators, teachers, and staff, reviewed parent surveys responses, and visited classrooms throughout the district. Auditors found that while the district has an equity policy, there is a need for accompanying administrative regulations to effectively implement the policy and a need for an equity plan to monitor and evaluate equitable practices in the district. Secondly, the auditors found that there is a disproportionate attendance and suspension/expulsion rate for some students in the district. Third, access to advanced level curriculum as defined by Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes is disparate for some student populations. Fourth, ELL student performance on state level tests lag behind their same grade level peers, as does the performance of students with disabilities, and low-income students. Finally, while equity is a topic of importance in policy, auditors found that professional development on equity and cultural understanding at both the district and building level is not consistently provided throughout the district.

Auditors reviewed the district's Equity policy in **Finding 1.1, Exhibit 1.1.4: Curriculum Management Improvement Model Criteria and Characteristics of Quality Policies for Focus Area Three**. Auditors found *Criterion 3.5, Equitable and bias-free educational environment* to be adequate. Three areas specifically referencing equity and found to be adequate in the Audit Criteria and Characteristics (**Exhibit 1.1.4**) are the following:

- Has clear expectations for ensuring all students have an equitable school experience free from discrimination and bias.
- Defines equity and specifies district goals related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

- Establishes guidelines within the context of the district’s instructional vision and philosophy that inform and direct curriculum design, development, and revision and professional development initiatives.

The Board’s expectation for equity is expressed in policy, and the policy is determined by auditors to be adequate. Stamford Public Schools’ Equity policy provides board expectations for all students to be provided with school experiences that are biased free and without discrimination. The policy defines equity, and expresses goals relative to equity, diversity, and inclusion. The policy references professional development and calls for “ongoing professional development for staff and Board members specifically designed to strengthen knowledge and skills for eliminating racism, institutional racism, implicit bias, and disproportionality in achievement and opportunity gaps between groups of students.” (*Board Policy 5000.1 p. 5*)

While the action of equity begins at the board level with specific policy for incorporating equity, the policy must be made actionable with accompanying administrative regulations and be evident in the processes and monitoring procedures that are implemented across the district, but particularly at the building level. Neither administrative regulation to implement the policy or an equity plan for SPS was presented to the auditors. Board policy and administrative regulations may be further strengthened with the development of and implementation of such an equity plan. The administrative regulations and an equity plan typically lay out processes and guidelines that include monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the concept of equity is integrated seamlessly throughout the district, in every department and at every level. A focus on systemwide professional development is typically included in the equity plan. . Without a plan and without clear and evident processes and department- and building-level decisions that reflect board policy, the policy was determined to be as yet unmet. This is best described by one building principal, “Ensuring equity in instruction for all students to achieve is a great need in the district.”

### **Disproportionality in Attendance and Discipline Across Student Groups**

Attendance is an important component of student success. Students who are in classes on a regular basis and participating in the instructional process are more likely to have success in their schoolwork. Students can receive assistance with their assignments and receive feedback on their progress when they attend school. Teachers are better able to monitor their progress and provide instruction tailored to students when students are in attendance. Absenteeism many times correlates with low achievement among students. A student is chronically absent when they miss 10% or more of the total days during an academic year, according to the Connecticut State Department of Education. Attendance can be a barrier to achieving equity because students are not present to benefit from the full gamut of resources and opportunities available to them.

Stamford Public School’s Improvement Goal 4 has a stated objectives to “promote consistent school attendance for all students K-12 and staff. The initiative for the objective is to “ensure SPS systematically addresses school chronic absenteeism, for staff and students.” The district aims to “decrease in number of students chronically absent by grade and student groups.” Individual School Improvement Plans record the number of chronically absent students in three increments: Beginning of Year (BOY), Middle of Year (MOY), and End of year (EOY). Auditors were not presented with a strategy for addressing chronic absenteeism in the School Improvement Plans.

Auditors reviewed data from the Connecticut Department of Education and found disparities in attendance by student population subgroups. African American and Latino students were more likely to be chronically absent than white students.

Connecticut State Department of Education data shows chronic absenteeism for Stamford Public Schools by gender, race, English Language Learners, Free or Reduced-Price Meals, and Students with Disabilities for School Year 2019-2020. The data is displayed in **Exhibit 3.3.1**. A note to the data indicates that classes were suspended in mid-March (2019-2020) for schools in Connecticut. The data is reflective of in-school days only.

**Exhibit 3.3.1: Chronic Absenteeism, Connecticut State Department of Education, District Profile and Performance Report, 2019-20**

|   | Chronic Absenteeism* |          | District Enrollment |
|---|----------------------|----------|---------------------|
|   | Count                | Rate (%) | (%)                 |
| Female  | 1,053                | 13.3     | 48.1                |
| Male  | 1,223                | 14.5     | 51.9                |
| Black/African American  | 412                  | 17.4     | 15.0                |
| Hispanic or Latino of any Race  | 1,106                | 15.1     | 45.0                |
| White   | 486                  | 9.9      | 30.0                |
| English Learners  | 460                  | 18.8     | 14.0                |
| Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals  | 1,606                | 16.7     | 59.0                |
| Students with Disabilities  | 500                  | 21.3     | 14.9                |
| District  | 2,275                | 14.0     |                     |
| State   |                      | 12.2     |                     |
| Number of students in 2018-19 qualified as truant under state statute:  |                      |          | 2,783               |
| Number of school-based arrests:   |                      |          | 0                   |
| Note: In the 2019-20 school year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person classes were cancelled in mid-March; all districts switched to fully remote instruction for the remainder of the school year. Chronic absenteeism calculations are based only on in-person school days. |                      |          |                     |
| *A student is chronically absent if they miss 10% or greater of the total number of days enrolled in the school year for any reason. Pre-Kindergarten students are excluded from this calculation.  |                      |          |                     |
| Source: CT Dept of Education Website  |                      |          |                     |

Overall, chronic absenteeism in SPS exceeds the state average by just under two percentage points, at 14.0% vs. the state rate of 12.2%. The above shows that male students tend to be absent at a slightly higher rate than female students (14.5% vs 13.3%). It also shows that Black/African American student absenteeism is disproportionate with their enrollment. Their absenteeism rate exceeds their enrollment by over three percentage points (17.4% vs enrollment at 14.0%). Hispanic/Latino students' rates of absenteeism disproportionally exceeds the district percentage (15.1% vs 14.0%).

Student with disabilities (SWD) are absent at a rate of 21.3%. This exceeds their enrollment percentage by over five percentage points (21.3% vs 16.0%). English Language Learners (ELL) are absent at a rate of 18.8%, which is also disproportional with their enrollment of 14%, for a difference of almost five percentage points. Chronic absenteeism for students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) is disproportional, as well, and exceeds the district average (21.3% vs district average absenteeism rate of 14.0%).

Absenteeism for White students is below the district and state averages. All other groups' absentee rates are above the district and state average.

Overall, chronic absenteeism in Stamford Public Schools exceeds the percentage in the state of Connecticut. Of note, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students in Stamford School District have chronic absenteeism at rates higher than the district average. Also, students with disabilities have

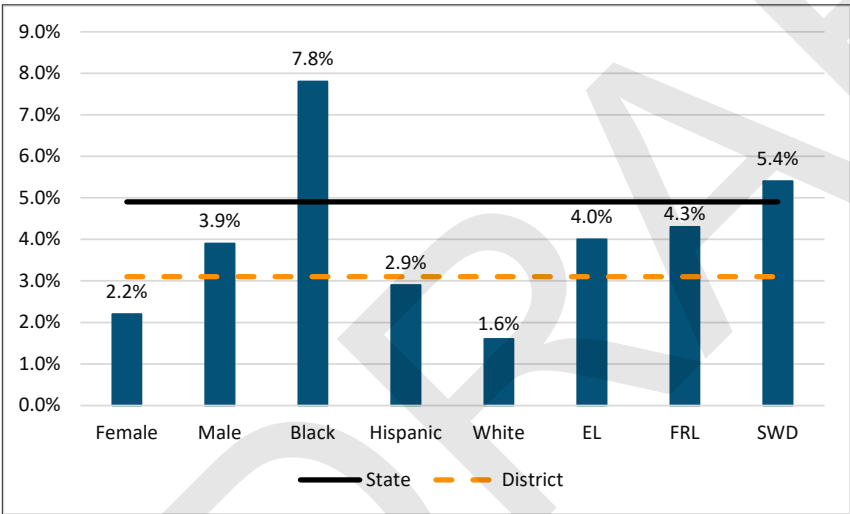
the highest chronic absenteeism rate, and the most disproportional rate when compared with their district enrollment.

**Suspension/Expulsion**

Excluding students from classes and school, as in suspending and expelling students, usually occurs when an infraction of district policy or Student Code of Conduct occurs. When students are unable to attend classes, they most times are not afforded the help they need to complete assignments, if given assignments at all. This contributes to poor achievement as students may be lag behind their classmates in schoolwork, become more disengaged from school, and even experience higher dropout rates and failure rates. Oftentimes the students receiving suspensions/expulsions are non-white students and are disproportional with their district enrollment.

The exhibit below shows Connecticut State Department of Education data on suspension/expulsion rates for Stamford Public Schools by gender, race, English Language Learners (ELL), Free or Reduced-Price Meals (FRL), and Students with Disabilities (SWD) for School Year 2019-2020

**Exhibit 3.3.2: Suspension/Expulsion, Connecticut State Department of Education, District Profile and Performance Report, 2019-20**



Connecticut State Department of Education data on suspensions and expulsions identifies students with at least one in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion. The above exhibit shows that male students are suspended/expelled at a rate of 3.9% compared to female students being suspended or expelled at a rate of 2.2%. Data also shows that Black students’ rates of suspension/expulsion is higher than the district average (7.8% vs 3.1%).

English Learners are suspended or expelled at a rate of 4.0% which exceeds the district average. Suspension/expulsion rates for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals is 4.3%. Students with disabilities have a suspension/expulsion rate of 5.4%. The average suspension/expulsion rate for the district is lower than the state by 1.8%. White students’ suspension/expulsion rates are below the district and state averages.

In summary, Board Policy 5000.1 Equity expresses the board’s commitment to equity practices and indicates that the “annual public report shall include an equity and diversity impact assessment that demonstrates policies with the least disparate impact have been adopted by the District.” Suspension/expulsion rates have tremendous impact on student learning and should be monitored as part of an equity plan and evaluation process (see **Recommendation 5**).

**Disproportionality in Graduation Rates**

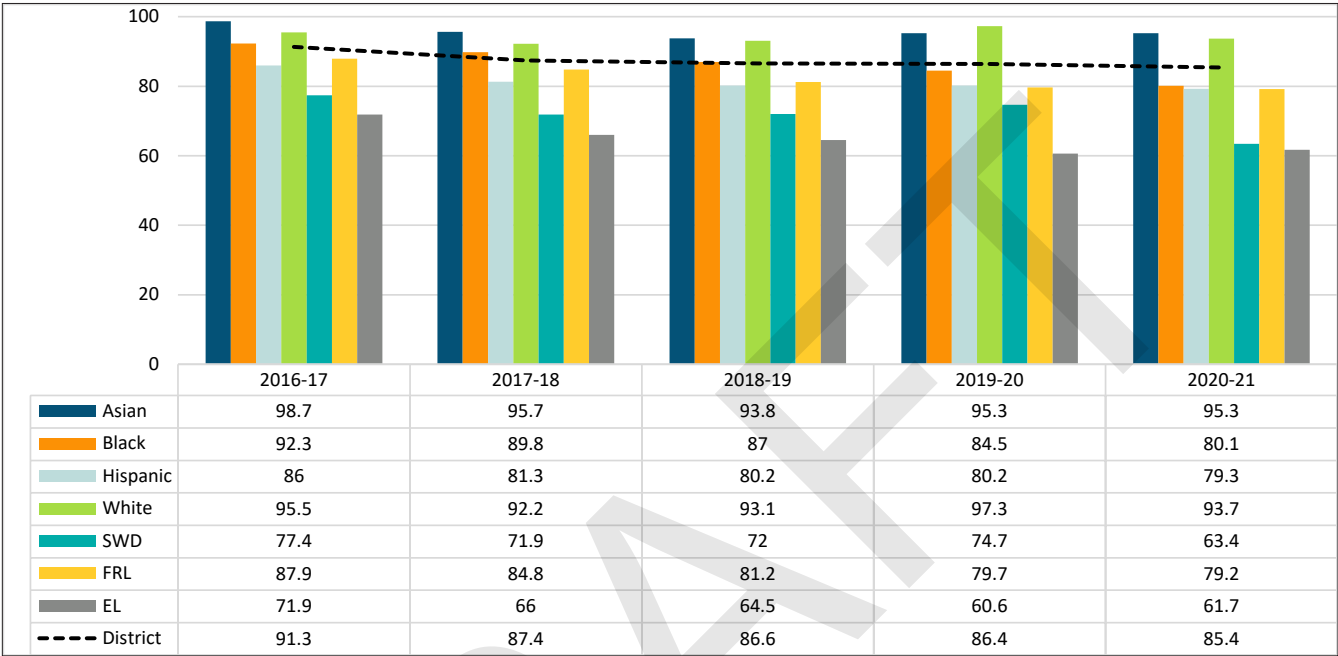
Auditors examined the graduation rates from 2016-17 to determine if the rates are consistent between student population within the district. The goal of all school districts is the graduate its students.



Failure to do so demonstrates an inability to address unique learning needs and adapt to changes in the demographics of the student population over time.

The following exhibit displays the 4-year graduation rate for 2016-17 through 2020-21 disaggregated for ethnicity and at-risk student statuses.

**Exhibit 3.3.3: Four Year Graduation Rate for District, Ethnicity, and At-Risk Status, 2016-2021**



Source: CT Department of Education, EdSight

As shown above, the district graduation rate ranges from 91.3 to 85.4%, depending on the student group. Asian and White students exceed the district average graduation rate each year. Black students exceeded the district rate the first two years, then fell below the district average graduation rate the last three years. Hispanic students graduate at the lowest rate across all student ethnic groups.

All students considered At-Risk fall below the district average every year. English Learners graduate at a rate well below the district average, at just 61.7 % in 2020-21. Assuming the goal of the district is for all students to graduate from high school, there are several student groups not currently meeting this goal.

### Disproportionality in Advanced Level Courses

One of the goals of Stamford Public Schools is to offer students courses that will challenge them and are aligned with their academic readiness. Advanced Placement (AP) courses and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs are ways school districts across the country use to meet diverse learning needs. SPS offers both Advanced Placement courses and an International Baccalaureate program. However, auditors found that access to Advanced Placement classes is limited because they are unevenly offered at high schools across the district. Auditors also found that enrollment in IB programs is disproportional for English Language Learners, and access to certain AP classes depends on which high school a student attends. **Exhibit 3.3.4** shows AP courses by title across the three district high schools: Academy of Information Technology and Engineering, Stamford High School, and Westfield High School.

**Exhibit 3.3.4: Stamford Public Schools, Advanced Placement (AP) Courses by School, 2021-2022**

| Course                                   | AITE* | Stamford HS | Westhill HS |
|--|-------|-------------|-------------|
| AP Biology                               |       |             | X           |
| AP Calculus AB                           | X     | X           | X           |
| AP Calculus BC                           | X     |             | X           |
| AP Chemistry                             | X     |             | X           |
| AP Computer Science A                    |       |             | X           |
| AP Computer Science Principles           |       | X           | X           |
| AP English 11                            | X     |             |             |
| AP English Language and Composition 11   |       | X           | X           |
| AP English Literature and Composition 11 |       |             | X           |
| AP English Literature and Composition 12 |       |             | X           |
| AP Environmental Science                 |       | X           | X           |
| AP European History                      | X     | X           |             |
| AP Government & Politics                 | X     | X           | X           |
| AP Human Geography                       | X     | X           | X           |
| AP Macroeconomics                        |       |             | X           |
| AP Microeconomics                        |       |             | X           |
| AP Physics 1                             |       | X           | X           |
| AP Physics C                             |       | X           | X           |
| AP Psychology                            |       | X           | X           |
| AP Spanish                               | X     |             |             |
| AP Spanish Language and Culture          |       | X           | X           |
| AP Statistics                            | X     | X           | X           |
| AP Studio Art                            |       | X           | X           |
| AP UConn Biology                         | X     |             |             |
| AP UConn ECE** Biology                   |       | X           |             |
| AP UConn ECE Calculus                    |       |             | X           |
| AP UConn ECE Chemistry                   |       | X           |             |
| AP UConn ECE English 11                  |       |             | X           |
| AP UConn ECE English 12                  |       | X           |             |
| AP UConn ECE Environmental Science       |       | X           | X           |
| AP UConn ECE Government and Politics     | X     | X           |             |
| AP UConn ECE Human Development           |       | X           |             |
| AP UConn ECE Physics C                   |       | X           |             |
| AP UConn ECE US History                  |       | X           | X           |
| AP UConn English 12                      | X     |             |             |
| AP UConn Environmental Science           | X     |             |             |
| AP UConn Fundamental Ear Training        |       | X           |             |
| AP UConn Macroeconomics                  |       | X           |             |
| AP UConn Microeconomics                  |       |             | X           |
| AP UConn Physics 1                       | X     |             | X           |

| Course   | AITE*     | Stamford HS | Westhill HS |
|--|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| AP U.S. History  | X         | X           | X           |
| AP VHS/VHS (Media Center)                                    | X         |             |             |
| AP World History   |           | X           | X           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>16</b> | <b>25</b>   | <b>28</b>   |
| *Academy of Information Technology & Engineering             |           |             |             |
| ** ECE – Early College Experience                            |           |             |             |
| Shaded rows indicate course taught at all three high schools |           |             |             |
| Source: District provided data                               |           |             |             |

Of the 43 Advanced Placement course titles offered in SPS high schools, only five courses are offered at all three high schools: AP Calculus AB, AP Government & Politics, AP Human Geography, AP Statistics, and AP US History. The courses are highlighted in the above exhibit. Westfield High School offers more AP courses than the other district high schools with 28 AP courses offered. Stamford High School offers the second highest number of AP courses at 25, and Academy of Information Technology & Engineering offers the least number of AP courses with 16 courses. The above exhibit highlights that students have different access to AP courses depending on where they attend high school.

EL student enrollment in AP and International Baccalaureate courses reflects a disparity when compared with their district enrollment. The specific disproportionalities include:

- Over 4% (4.4%) of the students enrolled in IB courses at SHS are also designated as EL students, compared to their overall district enrollment of 14.0%.
- Just under 4% (3.9%) of students enrolled in AP courses are also designated as EL students, compared to their overall district enrollment of 14.0%.

Auditors interviewed staff, teachers and parents and found mixed responses to access to AP classes. One building administrators stated: “AP classes, we’ve worked very hard in trying to get an AP class that represents the Stamford community. It’s one (thing) that we are trying to increase. We definitely have teachers and guidance counselors recommending students regardless of socio economic [status].” Another building administrator stated that “Black and brown children are over-represented in special education and under-enrolled in AP classes.”

SPS offers International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, beginning at the elementary school level. The school district’s IB program for primary students (ages 3-11) began in 2002, with authorization granted in 2005. It is located at Rogers International School and Strawberry Hill Elementary School. The Middle Years Program was authorized in 2012 and includes ages 11 to 16. The Middle Years Program is located at Strawberry Hill. Currently the district primary and middle years programs extends from Grades K-6. The district expects to expand to 8<sup>th</sup> grade by the fall of 2023. The Diploma Program, offered for the final two years prior to students attending a university, is located at Stamford High School. The Diploma Program was authorized by International Baccalaureate Organization in May 2018. The district website points out that students from all three district high schools are eligible to apply for the Diploma Program.

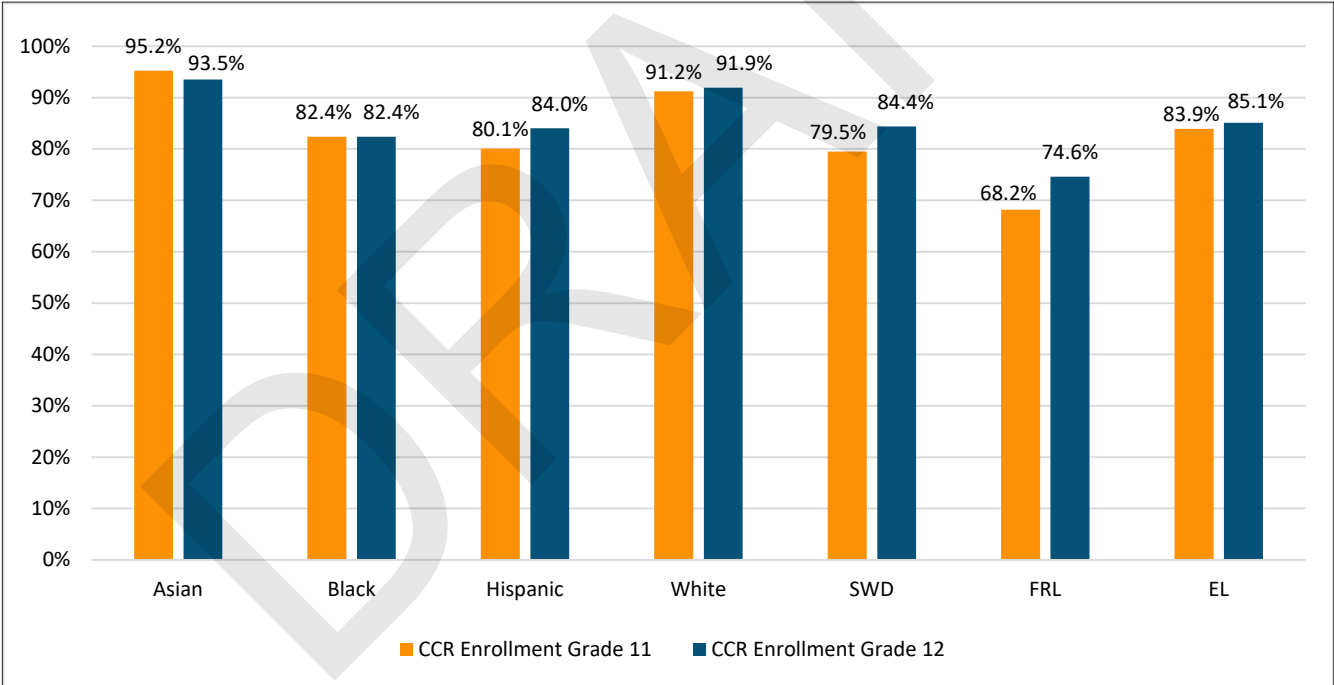
Auditors found that access to IB programs is limited by where a student attends school. The application process occurs in the fall, but applications are limited from students of color and from EL students. As one principal stated, “We do not get many applications from the EL students or African American students. I don’t know if it is the application process or the timing, but it just does not happen.” While the district indicates that students across the district are eligible to apply for the high school IB Diploma Program, it

is not specified if transportation is provided to students from other school attendance areas who wish to attend the IB program. Students' ability to get to special programs, like IB, can be a barrier to their access. One building administrator stated that, "The biggest bang for the buck is Early College Experience classes through UConn." The building administrator also stated that, "Students pay \$300 per ECE course, but it is a sure-thing college credit." Students who do not have the financial resources may be excluded from the Early College Experience. While ECE offers a program fee waiver for students who qualify for Federal Free/Reduced meals, students who do not qualify for these services yet that have financial need may not be able to afford the tuition and fees.

Auditors examined board policy (see Finding 1.1) and found that there is a discrepancy between what the board expects regarding access to special programs and what is currently happening at schools. In addition to finding that there is no consistency in the AP course offerings at district high schools, enrollment in these programs is disproportional for many student groups.

Auditors next examined the percentages of all students who are enrolled in College and Career Readiness Courses (CCR) for 2021. Courses considered CCR include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Career Technical Education (CTE), dual enrollment, and certain internships. The following exhibit displays the percentage enrolled in these courses disaggregated by ethnicity and at-risk status.

**Exhibit 3.3.5: CCR Enrollment by Ethnicity, and At-Risk Status, 2021**



Source: EdSight, CT Department of Education

The above exhibit displays the percentages of students in grade 11 and 12 within each subgroup that are enrolled in CCR courses. The percentages can be used for comparison purposes to determine if and whether the students from each group are enrolled in proportion to other groups. Ideally, similar percentages of students would be enrolled in these courses, demonstrating equal and proportional access to higher level curriculum.

The above exhibit demonstrates a disparity of enrollment in advanced level courses. The highest enrollment is among Asian and White students, with the lowest enrollment from Hispanic and Black student. The largest disparity range is over 15% between Asian and Hispanic 11<sup>th</sup> graders (95.2% vs

80.1%). Likewise, disparity exists among at-risk student, particularly low-income student (68.2% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders) and students with disabilities (79.5% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders). English Language learners also lag behind other students, though not a dramatically.

**Disproportionality in Student Test Performance**

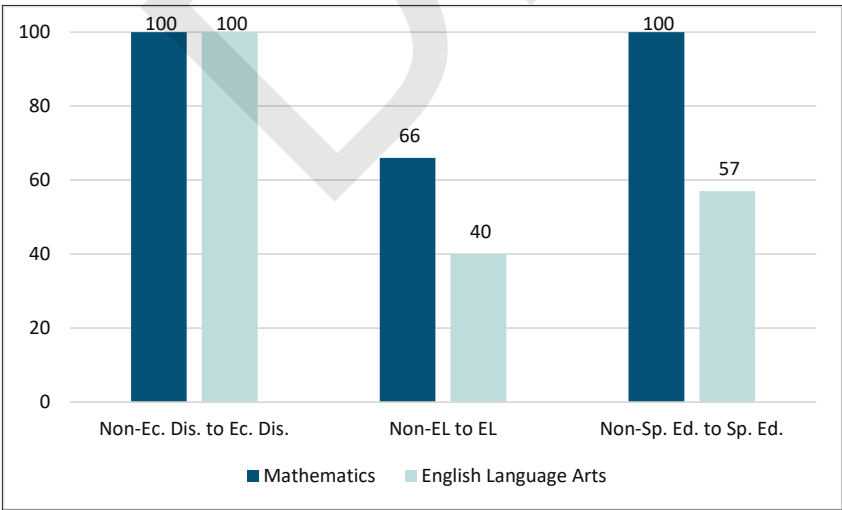
The auditors found that students in Stamford Public Schools are performing near the state average on the state-required assessments in English Language Arts and mathematics, and performing above districts that serve similar student populations. For a detailed analysis of assessment results (see **Finding 4.4**). State assessment results, however, also revealed persistent gaps in achievement for Economically Disadvantaged students, English learners, and special education students.

The district provided the auditors with data from a variety of assessments. After reviewing publicly accessible data from assessments, the audit team elected to focus on Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) results. SBAC are high-stakes criterion-referenced assessments used at the state and national levels to measure district success and are completed by the majority of the students. Therefore, they provide the broadest information about performance. The SBAC includes annual assessments for grades three through eight in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. Data from 2015 to 2019 were analyzed, as SBAC assessments were not administered in 2020, and data from 2021 are not appropriate to use for comparisons between districts due to varied assessment contexts due to COVID-related changes in learning and assessment modalities.

Achievement gaps between student groups within the district are persistent. To provide the district with predictive information that can be used to focus on closing the achievement gaps between student subgroups, the auditors ran a years to parity (YTP) analysis, a standard method of looking at longitudinal student performance data to estimate the time (in years) required to close the gap (attain parity), based on the current rate, without focused interventions.

The following exhibit illustrates the years-to-parity formula applied to economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students, English learners and non-English learners, and special education compared with regular education students, all for school years 2015 to 2019 on mathematics and ELA assessments. The full calculations for the YTP are presented in **Appendix I**.

**Exhibit 3.3.6: Years to Parity Analysis, Mathematics and ELA Performance Index, 2015-2019**



If future performance continues according to past performance, the gap in mathematics performance between Stamford Public Schools' economically disadvantaged students and the students who are not economically disadvantaged will never close if all things remain constant.



The gap in ELA performance between Stamford Public Schools' economically disadvantaged students and students who are not economically disadvantaged will never close if all things remain constant.

The gap in the mathematics performance between Stamford Public Schools' English learners and students who are not identified as English learners will close in 66 years if the current trajectory continues.

The gap in the reading performance between Stamford Public Schools' English learners and students who are not identified as English learners will close in 40 years without some kind of intervention.

The gap in the mathematics performance between Stamford Public Schools' special education students and students who are not receiving special education services will never close if the current trend continues.

The gap in the reading performance between Stamford Public Schools' special education students and the students who are not receiving special education services will close in 57 years without disruptive intervention.

District teachers noted concerns over student performance on the survey: "Student achievement levels need improvement." Another stated, "[Stamford needs to begin] closing the achievement gap."

### **Planning and Program Design for English Learners**

Enrollment of students whose home language is other than English (EL) for the 2021-22 school year is 13.6% (2,190 of 16,079, EdSight, CT Department of Education). As demonstrated above, this subgroup of students has lower graduation rates, higher absenteeism and suspension rates, lower enrollment in advanced level coursework, and lower academic achievement compared to the district average.

Auditors were not presented with an EL program plan which might describe the goals and objectives for the design, implementation, and evaluation of this program. Likewise, auditors found that program delivery varied across school buildings and campuses thorough the district. Programming was more site-based and subject to the efforts of the building principals and individual teachers, limiting the consistency and overall quality of the program.

In a survey of building principals, they responded to the query "What is the quality of the program to support students whose primary language is not English?" Eighty-seven percent indicated the program was good or excellent. Teachers were surveyed with the question, "There is a well-designed program to support students whose primary language is not English." Fifty-four percent agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, while 46% disagreed, strongly disagreed, or did not know. Despite most building principals and a slight majority of teachers indicating the EL Program is of quality, the data show that EL student success could improve.

Additional survey questions provided to teachers elicited comments that reflect frustration with the EL program, as follows:

Teachers report a lack of uniformity throughout the district for EL students:

- "Our ELL students' services have been inconsistent (for many, nonexistent for the first month-plus of school)."
- "ELL in most schools only address students from Hispanic backgrounds, not much others."

The lack of a district curriculum and resources for EL instruction was cited by some teachers:

- "Outside of Google translate and resources I create- I am on my own."

- “There is no pacing guide and no curriculum binder as the other course. Even without that, my students have access to a diverse and rich curriculum via what I have created for them.”
- “Students are translating for each other during class. There simply is not enough support for our ELL students.”
- “We have many students in our school who come from other countries with little or no formal schooling. They do not know letters or numbers and are placed in regular classrooms. This poses a major challenge to everyone. There are absolutely no resources provided to support these children.”

Some teachers commented on the need for a program design:

- “We should use SIOP [Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol] to teach ELLs because it’s the only research proven model. We don’t use any model.”
- “There are not enough courses available to the ELLs in our school.”
- “My ELL student only gets to see the ELL teacher for one subject.”

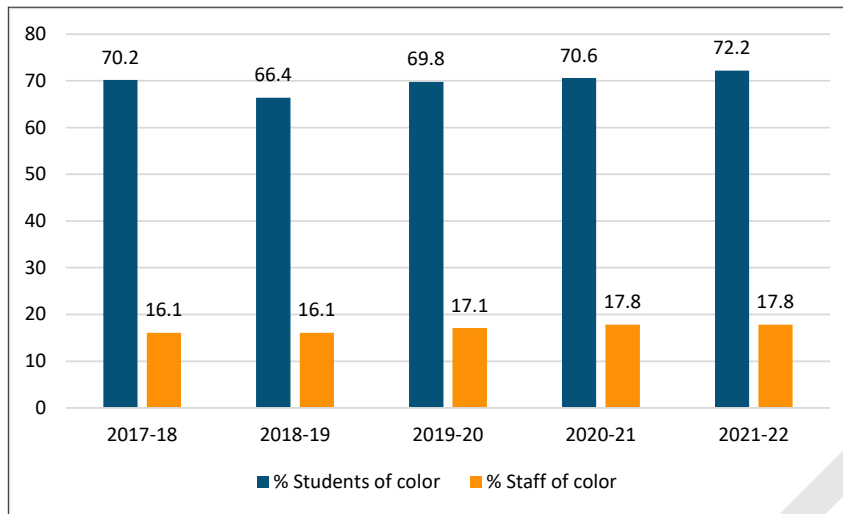
In the absence of a well designed and delivered program for EL students, individual schools and/or classroom teachers are forced to develop their own strategies and deliver programming that may be inconsistent across schools. Without clear and consistent goals, expectations, and guidelines for implementation, such a program is impossible to monitor for effectiveness, difficult to manage from a district perspective, and ultimately will not effectively meet the needs of the children it is intended to serve. As one SPS teacher stated, “The program is a mess; not to mention the social/emotional problems that these students experience; yet they are thrown into regular classes and it becomes a ‘teacher problem.’ Most regular teachers are not ELL, Bilingual, or Spanish teachers, so it is not fair to place students in a classroom in which they do not belong, hoping that we can PASS THEM.” Current programming, despite considerable efforts of EL teachers, is not adequately coordinated and planned to ensure maximum effectiveness.

### **Lack of representation among teaching staff and inadequate professional development**

Professional development is a tool that helps the district focus on areas where it would like to see alignment and improvement (see **Finding 3.2**). Training in equitable practices can be used to establish a culture that supports statements in the board policy. Auditors found that professional development on equity is not systemwide and that few schools have included professional development on equity.

Auditors began by determining the percentage of staff vs student of color as provided by the CT Department of Education, EdSight. Ideally the percentage will either be similar or moving in that direction. The exhibit below demonstrates the percentages over the past five school years.

### Exhibit 3.3.7: Staff vs Student Diversity, 2017-2022



As shown, the percentage of staff of color has remained about 17% while students of color have remained about 70% of the district enrollment with only slight variations.

White educators represent 83% of the district teaching staff. White students represent 30.2% of the district's student enrollment. The disparity presents an opportunity for aligned and focused professional development to assist with instructional practices and cultural sensitivity. During interviews with

auditors, a district administrator stated, "We are struggling with staff demographics – getting them to match student demographics." Interviews with building administrators shows a similar statement, "We are trying to recruit men and people of color."

Stamford Public Schools is a diverse district with African American and Latino students representing 59% of its student body (2019-20). Oftentimes sensitivity to diversity is enhanced by focused, aligned, and committed professional development. The following exhibit shows October 1, 2019 enrollment for Stamford School District. Due to COVID-19, this is the latest data available from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

### Exhibit 3.3.8: Student Enrollment, Ethnicity, and At-Risk Status, 2019

| Ethnicity                                 | District |                         | State                   |
|---|----------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
|   | Count    | Percentage of Total (%) | Percentage of Total (%) |
| Female                                    | 7,990    | 48.1                    | 48.4                    |
| Male                                      | 8,610    | 51.9                    | 51.6                    |
| American Indian or Alaska Native          | 19       | 0.1                     | 0.3                     |
| Asian                                     | 1,183    | 7.1                     | 5.2                     |
| Black or African American                 | 2,410    | 14.5                    | 12.7                    |
| Hispanic or Latino of any race            | 7,391    | 44.5                    | 26.9                    |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 19       | .01                     | .01                     |
| Two or More Races                         | 566      | 3.4                     | 3.8                     |
| White                                     | 5,012    | 30.2                    | 51.1                    |
| English Learners                          | 2,392    | 14.4                    | 8.3                     |
| Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals  | 9,812    | 59.1                    | 43.3                    |
| Students with Disabilities                | 2,405    | 14.5                    | 16.0                    |

Source: Edsight, CT Dept of Education

The above exhibit shows the district's diversity by race and ethnicity, gender, English Language Learners, Socio-Economic status, as indicated by students eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and students with disabilities. The exhibit shows the number of students in each category, along with the percentage of the total number of students in the district and in the state. The data was helpful as auditors looked at

the disparity between student subgroups and demographics of teachers in SPS, as well as when looking at disparities in school attendance and suspension/expulsion rates by student populations. Stamford Public School’s policy states that “The District shall offer opportunities for all staff to improve its cultural competencies in serving a diverse student body and community.” (*Board Policy 5000.1 p. 5*). The data from Connecticut State Department of Education provides evidence of the disparities and the need to provide the necessary professional development to mitigate bias and embrace diversity.

Auditors found that of the district’s 21 schools, professional development on the topic of equity, diversity, or cultural competence was listed at three schools. The topics included culturally competent teaching; diversifying and differentiating curriculum; and expanding equity and access. Auditors were not provided with any documents on required districtwide professional development on equity. A District Administrator stated, “Professional development is basically school based. There is no district plan for professional development.”

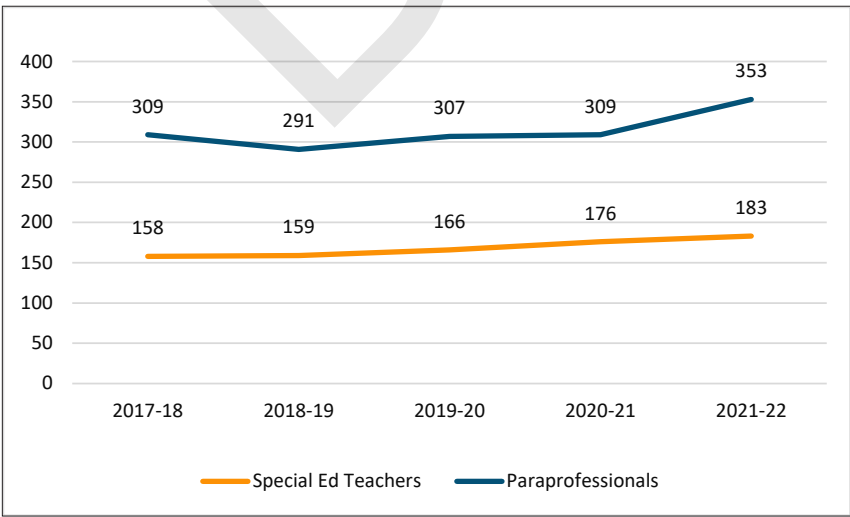
Professional development helps the district and schools prioritize what areas need focus. Professional development is a means of assisting teachers, administrators, staff, and board with equity issues. When staff diversity does not mirror the student population, professional development may serve to heighten sensitivity to diversity issues and an understanding of the population of students being served by the school system. The absence of districtwide professional development and district mandated professional development leaves the district staff, teachers, and administrators without concerted focus on what equity issues are prioritized for implementation.

In summary, issues of equity and equality are not consistently implemented or included in planning across the district. Appropriate professional development in equity and cultural understanding might serve to enhance and encourage sensitivity to the diverse student body educators are teaching and interacting with daily. Expectations for aligned and systematic professional development at the district level and at the school building level should be included in the equity plan.

**District Response to Inequities in Special Education**

As demonstrated above, the learning needs of many special education student have been a cause for concern among district staff and administration. The district has taken steps to help address the needs of special education students with increases in staff and budgets over the past five years. The following exhibit shows staff levels for the past five years for special education staff.

**Exhibit 3.3.9: Special Education Staffing, 2016-2021**

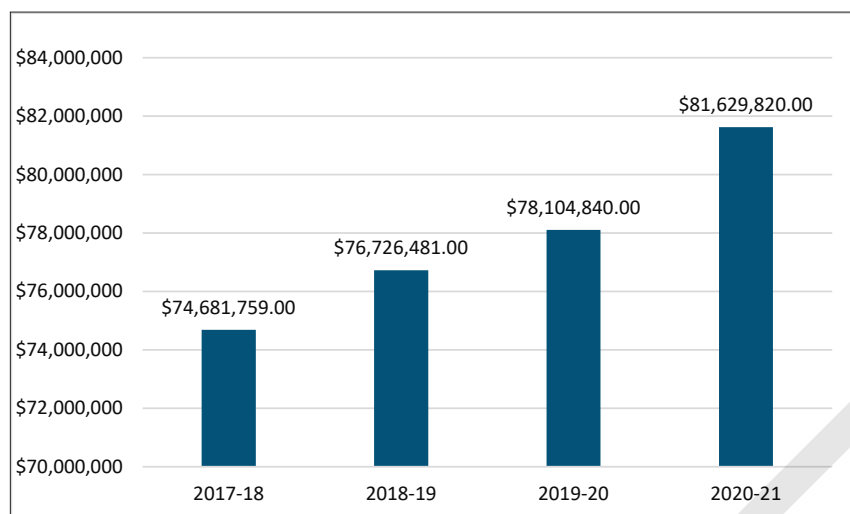


As shown, staffing of special education teachers has increased from 158 to 183, an increase of 16% over five years. Staffing of paraprofessionals has increase from 309 to 353, and increase of 14% over that same time.

The following exhibit displays the increase in the district budget specially devoted to special education purposes over the past four years.

Source: CT Department of Education, Ed Sight

### Exhibit 3.3.10: Special Education Funding, 2017-18 to 2020-21



Source: CT Department of Education, EdSight

As shown, special education funding has increased over the past four years from 74.6M to 81.6M, an increase of 9.3%.

SPS has demonstrated an interest in addressing the unique learning needs of their special education students. Increases in personnel and funding are one way the district hopefully solves the academic performance shortcomings in the past.

### Summary

Stamford Public Schools have taken steps to help address the equality and equity issues prevalent within the district. The adoption of a district equity plan, increases in funding, and additional special education staff are some of the initiatives taken in the past few years. Issues of equity, however, are not easily solved and take time to ameliorate. Disparities remain in the areas of graduation rates, attendance, expulsions, opportunities to advanced level coursework, and student performance on state tests. All are a reflection of the many challenges which remain for the board, administration, and staff of SPS. (see **Recommendation 5**)



DRAFT

# FOCUS AREA FOUR: The School District Uses the Results from System-Designed and/or -Adopted Assessments to Adjust, Improve, or Terminate Ineffective Practices or Programs.

A school system meeting **Focus Area Four** has designed a comprehensive system of assessment/testing and uses valid measurement tools that indicate how well its students are achieving designated priority learning goals and objectives.

## What the Auditors Expected to Find in the Stamford Public Schools:

| Focus Area Four: Feedback  | Common indicators   |
|--|---|
| Under Focus Area Four, the auditors examine the overall scope and quality of the assessment system in providing data (feedback) for use in decision making at all levels of the system: classroom, building, and district. A school system meeting Focus Area Four has designed a comprehensive system of assessment/testing and uses valid measurement tools that indicate how well its students are achieving designated priority learning goals and objectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A <i>formative</i> and <i>summative</i> assessment system linked to a clear rationale in board policy;</li><li>• Knowledge, local validation, and use of current best practices for curriculum and program assessment;</li><li>• Use of a student and program assessment plan that provides for diverse assessment strategies for varied purposes at all levels—district, school, and classroom;</li><li>• A way to provide feedback to the teaching and administrative staffs regarding how classroom instruction may be modified, evaluated, and subsequently improved;</li><li>• A timely and relevant database upon which to analyze important trends in student achievement;</li><li>• A vehicle to examine how well specific programs are actually producing desired learner outcomes or results;</li><li>• A database to compare the strengths and weaknesses of various programs and program alternatives, as well as to engage in equity analysis;</li><li>• A database to modify or terminate ineffective educational programs;</li><li>• A method/means to relate to a programmatic budget and enable the school system to engage in cost-benefit analysis; and</li><li>• Organizational data gathered and used to continually improve system functions.</li></ul> |

## Overview of What the Auditors Found in the Stamford Public Schools:

This section is an overview of the findings that follow in the area of **Focus Area Four**. Details follow within separate findings.

Auditors determined that a comprehensive student assessment plan to guide decision making for improved student achievement does not exist. While some policies address certain aspects of assessment, the policies provide insufficient oversight to manage the assessment program.

Auditors expect that every course taught in the district has an assessment to monitor and measure student learning. Only 23% of core courses and 3% of non-core courses had a formal assessment available.

Stamford Public Schools uses a variety of assessments to monitor student progress; however, the overall scope of assessment is not adequate to provide complete and comprehensive feedback on the district's curriculum program. The auditors also found that the district's use of formative assessments for the collection and analysis of data is inconsistent.

Although teachers report using data frequently to plan instruction, auditors did not find evidence that data were being used to differentiate initial classroom instruction, or that data informed decisions about curriculum and instruction in the district.

Students in Stamford Public Schools are performing near the state average on the state-required assessments in English language arts and mathematics, and performing well above districts serving similar student populations. State assessment results, however, also revealed persistent gaps in achievement for economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and special education students.

**Finding 4.1: The district does not currently have a student assessment and program management plan. Although some components are found in policy and district documents, direction for student assessment planning does not support improved student learning or meet audit expectations.**

An effective student assessment system ensures that students are being assessed appropriately and that the data from those assessments are utilized to make informed decisions that positively influence teaching and student learning. An effective system provides information that can be used at all levels of the district, from central office administrators making budget decisions, to principals allocating resources, to individual teachers modifying instruction for individual students. When a school district does not have an effective approach for student assessment at all levels—classroom, campus, and district—decision-makers lack the data to make informed decisions and must rely on instinct and/or past practice.

A comprehensive assessment system includes a clear plan for how students are assessed and how the information is used. The plan expects students to be assessed in all content areas, in a formative fashion that provides educators with the diagnostic information needed to adapt and improve instruction for their students, as well as in a summative fashion. An effective assessment system also includes procedures and information for evaluating academic programs to determine their effectiveness so they can be continued, modified, or terminated. The assessment system should also provide direction for assessing district expectations, such as Stamford Public Schools Strategic Goal #2: Foster Productive Habits of Mind that include critical and creative thinking. The desired impact of an effective student assessment program is the ongoing improvement of student achievement over time.

To determine the scope and adequacy of Stamford Public Schools' plan/planning for student assessment, auditors reviewed board policy, job descriptions, planning documents related to assessment, curriculum documents, and assessment materials.

Board policy requires the development and implementation of a district student assessment process that goes beyond the state accountability assessment system and includes formative and summative measures that align to the district's vision and goals (see **Finding 1.1**). *Policy 6121: Standards-Based Curriculum* and a document entitled *A Plan for Curriculum Management, Design, and Delivery in Stamford Schools*, which accompanies the policy, include some components of an assessment system.

Overall, auditors found the district does not have a comprehensive assessment plan. Written direction for student assessment planning is limited to calendars identifying specific dates and purposes for assessments; a section in *A Plan for Curriculum Management, Design, and Delivery in Stamford Schools*, Phase II, #6—"Develop assessments to measure student progress;" and the job descriptions for the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and other key positions. Board policies, job

descriptions, and other district documents, collectively, do not provide adequate direction for effective student assessment planning.

In addition to and in tandem with characteristics of an effective curriculum management plan found in **Finding 2.1** the audit looks for 16 characteristics of an effective student assessment and program evaluation plan to support teaching and learning in a district with a viable written curriculum. The following exhibit provides a reference for district administrators as they design a future comprehensive plan, as well as auditors' ratings related to the characteristics based on documents provided by the district.

**Exhibit 4.1.1: Characteristics of a Comprehensive Student Assessment and Program Evaluation Plan**

| Characteristic (The plan...)   | Auditors' Rating |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Describes the philosophical framework for the design of the student assessment plan and directs both formative and summative assessment of the curriculum by course and grade in congruence with board policy. Expects ongoing formative and summative program evaluation; directs use of data to analyze group, school, program, and system student trends.                                | P*               |
| 2. Includes an explicit set of formative and summative assessment procedures to carry out the expectations outlined in the plan and in board policy. Provides for regular formative and summative assessment at all levels of the system (organization, program, student).   |                  |
| 3. Requires that formative, diagnostic assessment instruments that align to the district curriculum be administered to students frequently to give teachers information for instructional decision making. This includes information regarding which students need which learner objectives to be at the appropriate level of difficulty (e.g., provides data for differentiated instruction). | P*               |
| 4. Provides a list of student assessment and program evaluation tools, purposes, subjects, type of student tested, timelines, etc.   | X                |
| 5. Identifies and provides direction on the use of diverse assessment strategies for multiple purposes at all levels—district, program, school, and classroom—that are both formative and summative.   |                  |
| 6. Specifies the roles and responsibilities of the central office staff and school-based staff for assessing all students using designated assessment measures, and for analyzing test data.   | X                |
| 7. Directs the feedback process; assures the proper use of assessment data at all levels.  |                  |
| 8. Specifies the connection(s) among district, state, and national assessments.  |                  |
| 9. Specifies the overall assessment and analysis procedures used to determine curriculum effectiveness.  |                  |
| 10. Requires aligned student assessment examples and tools to be placed in curriculum and assessment documents.  | P*               |
| 11. Specifies how equity issues will be identified and addressed using data sources; controls for possible bias.   |                  |
| 12. Identifies the components of the student assessment system that will be included in program evaluation efforts and specifies how these data will be used to determine continuation, modification, or termination of a given program.   | P*               |
| 13. Provides for appropriate trainings for various audiences on assessment and the instructional use of assessment results.  |                  |
| 14. Delineates responsibilities and procedures for monitoring the administration of the comprehensive student assessment and program evaluation plan and/or procedures.  | P*               |

| Characteristic (The plan...)   | Auditors' Rating |
|--|------------------|
| 15. Establishes a process for communicating and training staff in the interpretation of results, changes in state and local student achievement tests, and new trends in the student assessment field. |                  |
| 16. Specifies creation of an assessment data system that allows for the attribution of costs by program, permitting program evaluations to support program-based cost-benefit analyses.                |                  |
| <b>Total Met</b>   | <b>2/16</b>      |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>  | <b>13%</b>       |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met   |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.   |                  |
| ©2021 CMSi   |                  |

Two of 16 characteristics in the above exhibit met audit expectations for a rating of 13%, which is below the 70% minimum for adequacy; five characteristics partially met audit expectations but were counted as not met when determining percentage of adequacy; and nine characteristics were rated not met.

Stamford Public Schools provided the auditors with a detailed list of assessments that included administration dates, grades/subjects tested, purpose of the test, and student subgroups for a particular test. In addition to administration dates, the list is also organized by months: September – December, December – February, and April – June (Characteristic 4). Job descriptions for district personnel include specific responsibilities related to assessment: 1) Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning plans the district assessment program, oversees development of formative and summative assessment tools, oversees administration of assessments, compiles and analyzes student assessment data, and participates in program evaluation; 2) Directors of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment – Elementary (K-5) and Secondary (6-12) collaborate with the Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning on assessment; 3) High School Department Heads participate in the development, articulation, and implementation of assessments; and 4) Elementary and Middle School Principals monitor and evaluate student learning, using assessments and data and accountability strategies (Characteristic 6).

Five characteristics of a student assessment and program evaluation management plan were rated by the auditors as Partially Met, meaning the plan/planning meets certain aspects of the characteristic, but not fully. The following narrative includes an explanation of the auditors' ratings in relationship to those characteristics. A philosophical framework for the design of the student assessment plan directs both formative and summative assessment of the curriculum by course and grade in congruence with board policy. *Policy 6121* requires "the collection and analysis of district-level data from recurring formative and summative assessments," but does not direct use of data to analyze group, school, program, and system student trends. (Characteristic 1). Phase II, #6, Bullet 2 of the curriculum management plan in **Finding 2.1** indicates that all local assessments should align to the content of the Grade Level Expectations selected by curriculum committees and organized by strand, units, and/or in sequential levels of



*Hart Magnet 1 on 1 instruction*



instruction. It does not require the frequent use of diagnostic assessments, nor does it require data for differentiated instruction (Characteristic 3).

The curriculum management plan lists components to be included in district curriculum guides, one being “specific instruction on how to evaluate key objectives;” however, there is no requirement or expectation for assessment examples and tools to be placed in curriculum documents (Characteristic 10). The curriculum management plan states, “Assessment results should be used for multiple decision-making processes including monitoring the progress of individual students and student groups; informing professional development needs; and evaluating the program to determine strengths and needs for curriculum revision.” Although this is a starting point, it is incomplete in identifying the components of the student assessment system that will be included in program evaluation efforts and specifying how these data will be used to determine continuation, modification, or termination of a given program (Characteristic 12). As indicated in job descriptions, Principals – Elementary and Middle School, as members of the School Data Team, monitor and evaluate student learning, using assessments and data. However, there is no clear delineation in other job descriptions, policy, or the curriculum management plan related to monitoring the administration of a comprehensive student assessment and program evaluation plan (Characteristic 14).

Auditors rated nine characteristics of student assessment and program evaluation planning as not met, indicating no documents related to the characteristic were provided for review.

### Summary

Stamford Public Schools currently does not have a comprehensive student assessment plan to guide decision making for improved student achievement. Although the district has some policies that address certain aspects of assessment, the policies provide insufficient oversight to manage the assessment program. The curriculum management plan discussed in **Finding 2.1** provides some direction for assessment but is general in nature and outdated. These documents collectively do not meet the 16 characteristics used by auditors to determine adequacy of student assessment planning and program evaluation (see **Recommendation 3**).

**Finding 4.2: The scope of the student assessment program is inadequate to provide systematic, valid, and consistent information as feedback to influence decisions and planning at the classroom, school, and district levels.**

A comprehensive student assessment program allows a school district to measure the effectiveness of the taught curriculum. A well-designed and purposeful system of assessment is an essential data source to determine if improvements should be made in what is taught, how it is taught, how it is tested, and conditions to support learning. A comprehensive program requires that student achievement is formally evaluated in every course taught within the system and at every grade level and that the district have an institutionalized process for using assessment data as feedback. When the scope of assessments does not meet these standards, internal and external stakeholders do not have the evidence they need to make sound decisions for improving the quality of learning for all students.

Formal assessment, in this context, can be defined as those assessments that are utilized as part of the tightly-held expectations of a school. These formal assessments “summative assessment” have a districtwide purpose and are used as a data source to help determine the success of written curriculum and instructional programming. Formal assessments are monitored and district oversight is expected. Loosely-held “formative assessments,” those that have a specific school or classroom purpose, are not to be confused with tightly-held formal assessments. Formative assessments are more often used to inform

the teacher while in the process of teaching to determine if students are grasping the concepts and/or mastering the skills. Both have a purpose, though that distinction varies depending on the intended use of the resulting data.

To determine the scope of the formal assessment program in Stamford Public Schools, auditors examined documents provided by district officials and available on the district website. They also surveyed teachers and principals to gather information regarding the scope of the district's assessment program.

The auditors found that Stamford Public Schools uses a variety of assessments to monitor student progress; however, the overall scope of assessment is not adequate to provide complete and comprehensive feedback on the district's curriculum program. Only 23% of core courses and 3% of non-core courses had a formal assessment available. The auditors also found that the district's use of formative assessments for the collection and analysis of data as feedback for improvement was missing several important elements.

Several board policies direct assessment practices as required by Connecticut and Stamford Public Schools. Policies currently in place, particularly *Board Policy 6121*, contain many of the characteristics of high-quality curriculum management, with the exception of alignment of assessment through curriculum content, context, and cognition, and the expectation that assessment validity be determined. The district provides additional direction in Stamford Public Schools *District Assessment Calendar 2021-22*.

Within this finding, auditors considered the scope of student assessment. The investigation of the district's scope of student assessment refers to the amount of curriculum that is tested formally. An assessment is considered formal if district officials describe it as a test administered across the system for a particular course or grade level, and if the data from the assessment can be collected at the central level for use in decision making. The audit expectation is that some form of formal assessment exists for 100% of courses in core content areas (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) and for at least 70% of non-core courses.

Auditors found that the Stamford Public Schools assessment program includes both state-mandated and locally required assessments. The exhibit below illustrates current required testing for kindergarten through grade 12. State and district required assessments for all students are indicated with "X," and assessments administered or offered to selected students are indicated with "S."

**Exhibit 4.2.1: Formal Assessments of Student Performance**

| Assessment   | Grade |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
|--|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
|  | K     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Advanced Placement (AP)                                      |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | S | S  | S  | S  |
| Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2)                    | S     | S | S | S | S | S |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Fall Kindergarten Entrance Inventory                         | X     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Foundations Literacy Skills Assessment                       | X     | X | S | S | S | S |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| English Language Proficiency Assessment (LAS) Links          | S     | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S  | S  | S  |
| English Language Proficiency Assessment (LAS) Placement Test | S     | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S  | S  | S  |
| Math Inventory   |       | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |    |    |    |
| mClass   | X     | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Next Generation Science and Alternate Assessment             |       |   |   |   |   | X |   |   | X |   |    | X  |    |
| PSAT   |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | X  | X  |    |
| Reading Inventory  |       |   |   | S | S | S | X | X | X | X |    |    |    |

| Assessment   | Grade |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
|--|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
|  | K     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)   |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    | X  |    |
| Smarter Balanced and CT Alternate Assessment   |       |   |   | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |    |    |    |
| Text Reading and Comprehension (TRC)/<br>Text Reading Online (TRO)   | S     | S | S | S | S |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Key: X=Required state or district assessment; S=Given to select students; a blank space indicates that no formal test is given |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Data Sources: Stamford Public Schools public website and shared documents  |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |

As indicated above, district required assessments (specifically the *DRA2*, *LAS Links*, *LAS Placement Test*, *Smarter Balanced*) are in place for English language arts for grades K-9. District required assessments are in place for mathematics for grades 1-9. English learners are assessed in grades K-12. Connecticut requires the *Smarter Balanced* or *CT Alternate Assessment* in ELA and mathematics for grades 3-8 and *Next Generation Science or Alternate Assessment* in science for grades 5, 8, and 11.

The next exhibits detail the scope of formal assessments district-wide at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. These exhibits illustrate the presence of formal assessments offered by course and grade level. The scope of student assessment refers to the presence of some form of tightly-held state or district assessment for every course.

#### Exhibit 4.2.2: Scope of Formal Assessments for Grades K-5

| Courses Offered   | Courses Offered by Grade Level |   |   |   |   |   | Total Courses Taught | Total Courses Formally Assessed | Percent Assessed |
|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
|   | K                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                      |                                 |                  |
| Core Content Area Courses   |                                |   |   |   |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| English Language Arts - Reading   | X                              | X | X | X | X | X | 6                    | 6                               | 100              |
| English Language Arts - Writing   | 0                              | 0 | 0 | X | X | X | 6                    | 3                               | 50               |
| English Language Arts - Oral Language   | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Mathematics   | X                              | X | X | X | X | X | 6                    | 6                               | 100              |
| Science   | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | X | 6                    | 1                               | 17               |
| Social Studies  | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Total (Core Courses)  |                                |   |   |   |   |   | 36                   | 16                              |                  |
| Percent of Core Courses Assessed  |                                |   |   |   |   |   |                      |                                 | 44%              |
| Non-Core Content Area Courses   |                                |   |   |   |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Art   | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Dance   | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Music   | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Problem Solving   | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Technology  | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Drama   | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Physical Education  | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Health  | 0                              | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Total (Non-Core Courses)  |                                |   |   |   |   |   | 48                   | 0                               |                  |
| Percent of Non-Core Courses Assessed  |                                |   |   |   |   |   |                      |                                 | 0%               |
| Key: X = Course offered at grade level; 0 = Course offered, no assessment available |                                |   |   |   |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Data Sources: Stamford Public Schools public website and shared documents           |                                |   |   |   |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |

The previous exhibit illustrates that reading and mathematics are tested in every grade at the elementary level. Writing is tested at grades 3 through 5. Science is assessed only in fifth grade, and no formal testing exists for oral language or social studies. Forty-four percent of core courses have formal assessments in place, and no formal assessments are in place for non-core courses at the elementary grades.

Middle grades were examined for scope of formal assessments. The results are presented below.

**Exhibit 4.2.3: Scope of Formal Assessments for Grades 6-8**

| Courses Offered                                   | Grade Level Offered |   |   | Total Courses Taught | Total Courses Formally Assessed | Percent Assessed |
|---|---------------------|---|---|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
|   | 6                   | 7 | 8 |                      |                                 |                  |
| Core Content Area Courses                         |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| English Language Arts                             |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| English Language Arts                             | X                   | X | X | 3                    | 3                               | 100              |
| Honors English Language Arts                      | X                   | X | X | 3                    | 3                               | 100              |
| IB Language and Literature                        | X                   | X | X | 3                    | 3                               | 100              |
| Totals (ELA)                                      |                     |   |   | 9                    | 9                               |                  |
| Percent of English Language Arts Courses Assessed |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 100%             |
| Mathematics                                       |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Math  | X                   | X | X | 3                    | 3                               | 100              |
| Honors Math                                       | X                   | X | X | 3                    | 3                               | 100              |
| IB Math   | X                   | X | X | 3                    | 3                               | 100              |
| Algebra I   |                     | X | X | 2                    | 2                               | 100              |
| Geometry  |                     |   | X | 1                    | 1                               | 100              |
| Totals (Mathematics)                              |                     |   |   | 12                   | 12                              |                  |
| Percent of Mathematics Courses Assessed           |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 100%             |
| Science   |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Science   | 0                   | 0 | X | 3                    | 1                               | 33               |
| Honors Science                                    | 0                   | 0 | X | 3                    | 1                               | 33               |
| IB Science  | 0                   | 0 | X | 3                    | 1                               | 33               |
| Totals (Science)                                  |                     |   |   | 9                    | 3                               |                  |
| Percent of Science Courses Assessed               |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 33%              |
| Social Studies                                    |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Social Studies                                    | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Honors Social Studies                             | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| IB Individuals and Societies                      | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Totals (Social Studies)                           |                     |   |   | 9                    | 0                               |                  |
| Percent of Social Studies Courses Assessed        |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 0%               |
| Total Core Courses                                |                     |   |   | 39                   | 24                              |                  |
| Percent of Core Courses Assessed                  |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 62%              |
| Non-Core Content Area Courses                     |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Non-Core Academics                                |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| AVID  | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Technology  | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Totals (Non-Core Academics)                       |                     |   |   | 6                    | 0                               |                  |
| Percent of Non-Core Academics Assessed            |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 0%               |

| Courses Offered  | Grade Level Offered |   |   | Total Courses Taught | Total Courses Formally Assessed | Percent Assessed |
|--|---------------------|---|---|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
|  | 6                   | 7 | 8 |                      |                                 |                  |
| Physical Education   |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Physical Education   | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| IB PE and Health   | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Totals (Physical Education)  |                     |   |   | 6                    | 0                               |                  |
| Percent of Physical Education Courses Assessed   |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 0%               |
| Foreign Language   |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Spanish I  | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Mandarin   | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               |                  |
| Totals (Foreign Language)  |                     |   |   | 6                    | 0                               |                  |
| Percent of Foreign Language Courses Assessed   |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 0%               |
| Fine Arts  |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Art  | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Band   | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Chorus   | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Music  | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Strings  | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Percussion   | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| IB Arts  | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| IB Design  | 0                   | 0 | 0 | 3                    | 0                               | 0                |
| Totals (Fine Arts)   |                     |   |   | 24                   | 0                               |                  |
| Percent of Fine Arts Courses Assessed  |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 0%               |
| Total Non-Core Content Area Courses  |                     |   |   | 42                   | 0                               |                  |
| Percent of Non-Core Content Area Courses Assessed  |                     |   |   |                      |                                 | 0%               |
| Key: X = Course offered at grade level, 0 = course offered, no assessment available, Blank = Course not offered at grade level             |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Note: Courses listed may include class offerings using various titles (see Exhibits 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 for a full list of individual classes) |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |
| Data Sources: Stamford Public Schools public website and shared documents  |                     |   |   |                      |                                 |                  |

As shown above, formal assessments are in place for English language arts and mathematics in every grade, 6 through 8. Assessments for science are in place for eighth grade, and no assessments are required for social studies at the middle school level. The district did not meet the audit standard of 100% in core areas. Non-core content areas in middle grades had no formal assessments.

The detailed list for core and non-core courses at the high school is presented in **Appendix G**.

The following observations are made from the data presented in **Appendix G**, the scope of student assessment does not meet the audit requirement of 100% in core content areas (14%) and does not meet the audit minimum of 70% in non-core courses (4%). Of the four core content areas, ELA is the most fully assessed at 17%, followed by mathematics at 15%, science at 13%, and social studies at 11%. Advanced Placement exams are the only formal assessments administered in the non-core area courses.



A summary of formal student assessments in core and non-core courses across all grades is presented below:

**Exhibit 4.2.4: Summary of Scope of Formal Assessments Grades K-12**

|  | Grades/Courses<br>Requiring Assessment | Grades/Courses<br>Assessed | Percent Assessed |
|--|--|----------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Core Content Area Courses</b>   |  |                            |                  |
| Elementary (Grades K-5)  | 36                                     | 16                         | 44               |
| Middle School (Grades 6-8)   | 39                                     | 24                         | 62               |
| High School (Grades 9-12)  | 254                                    | 36                         | 14               |
| <b>Totals (Core Courses)</b>   | <b>329</b>                             | <b>76</b>                  |                  |
| <b>Total Percent of Core Courses Formally Assessed</b>                           |  |                            | <b>23%</b>       |
| <b>Non-Core Content Area Courses</b>   |  |                            |                  |
| Elementary (Grades K-5)  | 48                                     | 0                          | 0                |
| Middle School (Grades 6-8)   | 42                                     | 0                          | 0                |
| High School (Grades 9-12)  | 277                                    | 11                         | 4                |
| <b>Totals (Non-Core Courses)</b>   | <b>367</b>                             | <b>11</b>                  |                  |
| <b>Total Percent of Non-Core Courses Formally Assessed</b>                       |  |                            | <b>3%</b>        |
| <i>Data Sources: Stamford Public Schools public website and shared documents</i> |  |                            |                  |

As displayed in the exhibit above, 23% of core courses district-wide are formally assessed, and 3% of non-core courses have district-wide assessments in place. The scope did not meet the audit requirement of 100% coverage of core content areas and 70% for non-core content areas.

Teachers expressed concern over the current state of assessment, as indicated by the following comments gleaned from survey data:

- “Common assessments (midterms/finals) are not properly developed. They are filled with mistakes and cultural and gender bias. They are not scientifically developed to determine what they are assessing.”
- “We need more consistency throughout the district with how we assess students using the mandated assessments.”
- “We need fewer, more comprehensive forms of assessment, especially at the elementary level. Teachers are spending too much time giving the assessment and then not having enough time to teach to the areas of need that we discover.”

**Summary**

The scope of assessment of core and non-core curriculum in Stamford Public Schools is inadequate to assess and monitor student learning. Auditors found that district-wide assessments are limited to state-mandated (e.g., SBAC) and program-related (e.g., AP) courses at designated grade levels. District-wide benchmark assessments (e.g., Reading and Math inventories) are administered at most grade levels. No other district-wide mandated assessments are administered to the general student population to determine the level to which students have mastered the intended student learning outcomes of the curriculum (see **Recommendation 3**).

**Finding 4.3: The district does not have a systematic approach to the effective use of data for sound decision making regarding teaching, learning, and program evaluation.**

The systematic use of student assessment and program evaluation is necessary for a district to improve its curriculum, programs, services, and instruction. Summative, formative, and diagnostic assessments all serve specific purposes that must be explicit to users to maximize effective use of data. Data should be easily accessible, illustrated for users, and reveal patterns over time. Effective use of data at all levels of the district requires specific processes to be in place that support that effort. High performing districts are intentional in their efforts to develop assessment literacy skills in all staff if the expectation is to make data-informed decisions. A district may access, analyze, and discuss data, yet fail to utilize the data for sound decision making regarding teaching and learning.

To determine if the district data use is adequate to improve student achievement, auditors reviewed board policies, job descriptions, available district documents, and the responses of personnel collected through surveys and interviews. *Board Policy 6121* provided some clarification and expectation for the use of assessment data and program evaluation.

Overall, auditors found data use within the district was inadequate to improve student achievement. Data were not available for all content areas to support sound decision making regarding teaching and learning (see **Finding 4.2**). Although teachers report using data frequently to plan instruction, auditors did not find evidence that data were being used to differentiate initial classroom instruction, or that data informed decisions about curriculum and instruction in the district.

### ***Availability and Use of Formative Student Assessment***



*AITE teacher assisting students*

*A Plan for Curriculum Management, Design, and Delivery in Stamford Public Schools* states, "Assessment results should be used for multiple decision-making processes including monitoring the progress of individual students and student groups; informing professional development needs; and evaluating the program to determine strengths and needs for curriculum revision." Auditors conducted analyses of the formative assessment program in the district to determine if the design is adequate to make curricular decisions to influence student achievement. The auditors compared assessment resources specified in the district assessment calendar, other district documents, and survey comments

to minimal audit criteria for a comprehensive formative assessment program. The following exhibit provides the auditors' rating of the availability of district-wide formative assessment. A minimum score of 12 points is needed for a formative assessment program to be considered adequate.

**Exhibit 4.3.1: Formative Assessment Analysis Frame 1: Minimal Components**

| Point Value  | Criteria  | Auditors' Rating |
|--|---|------------------|
| 1. Formal formative student assessments for all curriculum standards/objectives are available for teacher use in determining students' initial acquisition of content  |   |                  |
| 0  | No district formative student assessments to determine initial acquisition of learning are in place for any of the curriculum standards.  |                  |
| 1  | Formative assessments to determine students' initial acquisition of learning are in place for some of the curriculum, including at least two or three academic core areas at a minimum of six grade levels.           | X                |
| 2  | Formative student assessments to determine initial acquisition of learning are in place for all required core academic courses (mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies) in grades 2-12.              |                  |
| 3  | Formative assessments are in place to determine students' initial acquisition of learning for all required and elective subject areas and all grades/courses.   |                  |
| 2. Informal formative assessments are available for all appropriate course/grade standards/objectives for teachers to use prior to teaching a standard to determine if students possess necessary prerequisites (the concepts, knowledge, and skills that are required before students can successfully master the intended standard or objective) |   |                  |
| 0  | No district formative student assessments to determine whether prerequisite knowledge of learning are in place for any of the curriculum standards.   |                  |
| 1  | Formative student assessments to determine student prerequisite knowledge of learning are in place for some of the curriculum, including at least two or three academic core areas, at a minimum of six grade levels. | X                |
| 2  | Formative student assessments to determine student prerequisite knowledge of learning are in place for all required core academic courses (mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies) in grades 2-12.   |                  |
| 3  | Formative student assessments to determine student prerequisite knowledge of learning are in place for all required and elective subject areas and all grades/courses.  |                  |
| 3. Informal formative assessments for all standards/objectives are in place for teachers to use prior to teaching a standard to determine prior student mastery  |   |                  |
| 0  | No district formative student assessments to determine students' prior mastery of learning are in place for any of the curriculum standards.  |                  |
| 1  | Formative student assessments to determine prior mastery of learning are in place for some of the curriculum, including at least two or three academic core areas at a minimum of six grade levels.                   | X                |
| 2  | Formative student assessments to determine students' prior mastery of learning are in place for all required core academic courses (mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies) in grades 2-12.          |                  |
| 3  | Formative student assessments to determine students' prior mastery of learning are in place for all required and elective subject areas and all grades/courses.   |                  |

| Point Value  | Criteria   | Auditors' Rating |
|--|--|------------------|
| 4. Pools of informal student assessment items for all curriculum standards/objectives are available for teachers to use during their ongoing instruction to diagnose students' current status of learning—both initial acquisition and sustained mastery |  |                  |
| 0  | No district item pools for informal district formative student assessments are available for teachers' use as part of their ongoing instruction around the standards.  | X                |
| 1  | Item pools for informal formative student assessments are available to determine student learning for some of the curriculum, including at least two or three academic core areas at a minimum of six grade levels.  |                  |
| 2  | Item pools for informal formative student assessments are available to determine student learning for all required core academic courses (mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies) in grades 2-12.   |                  |
| 3  | A variety of informal formative student assessments are available to determine student learning for all required and elective subject areas and all grades/courses.  |                  |
| 5. Formative student assessments are treated as diagnostic tools rather than summative tools   |  |                  |
| 0  | Formative student assessments are generally seen as summative in nature, or the distinction between the two is not reflected in their use.   |                  |
| 1  | Some formative student assessments are used appropriately, but most are seen and/or used as summative instruments. Grades are often assigned for scores.   | X                |
| 2  | Many formative student assessments are being used appropriately, but there is some use of the assessments in a summative way. In some cases, grades are assigned for scores.   |                  |
| 3  | Formative student assessments are generally used appropriately as diagnostic tools. No grades are given on the assessments; rather, teachers use the information from these assessments to guide their instructional decisions regarding each student's needs. |                  |
| <b>Total Points</b>  |  | <b>4</b>         |
| ©2021 CMSi   |  |                  |

As noted in the exhibit above, the cumulative score of 4 points for the formative assessment system examined did not meet the audit expectation of a minimum of 12 of the 15 possible points for adequacy. A summary of the rating for each of the five audit criteria follows.

#### **Criterion One: Initial Acquisition of Learning**

Formative proficiency tests (e.g., DRA2, mClass, Math Inventory) were available after initial instruction in specific standards for most courses in reading/English, mathematics, but were not present for courses in social studies or science. Auditors awarded 1 point for this criterion.

#### **Criterion Two: Prerequisite Skills Needed to Access Target Grade Level Standard**

District assessments in reading and math (e.g., DRA2, Foundations Literacy Skills Assessment, Math Inventory) could be used to diagnose a student's learning of the prerequisite skills needed to access a specific standard prior to instruction. Auditors awarded 1 point for this criterion.

#### **Criterion Three: Student Prior Mastery of Target Standard**

District assessments in reading and math utilizing the same assessments as listed in the above criteria could be used to measure the degree of students' prior mastery of the learning forthcoming in the target objective of a lesson/unit. Auditors awarded 1 point for this criterion.

**Criterion Four: Pools of Informal Assessment Items**

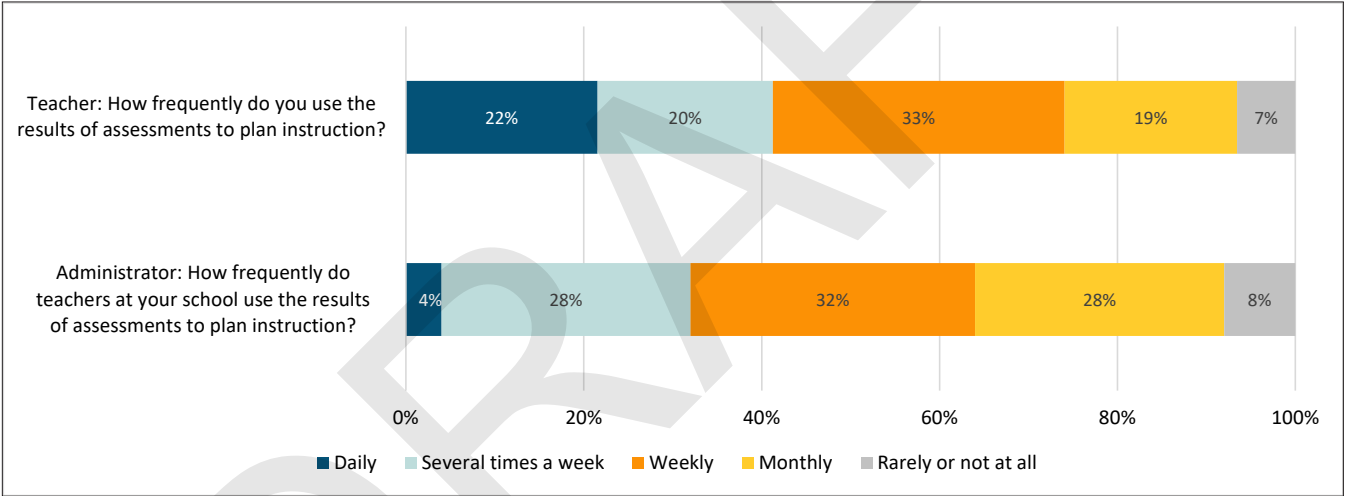
Auditors did not find evidence of an assessment item pool from which teachers could draw on assessment items aligned to summative testing expectations for content, cognitive demand, or format. Auditors awarded no points for this criterion.

**Criterion Five: Formative Tools Versus Summative Tools**

Survey comments revealed that assessments in the district are being used to determine groupings and interventions, but that these assessments are often used for grading as well. Auditors did not find any document that clarified the use of instruments for specific purposes with clarification of use for grading. To earn three points formative assessment must be used for the singular purpose of informing teachers for instructional decision-making, and not the awarding of grades to students. Auditors awarded 1 point for this criterion.

Teachers and administrators were surveyed regarding how frequently assessment data are used to plan instruction. Results are presented below.

**Exhibit 4.3.2: Teacher and Administrator Reports on Frequency of Data Use**



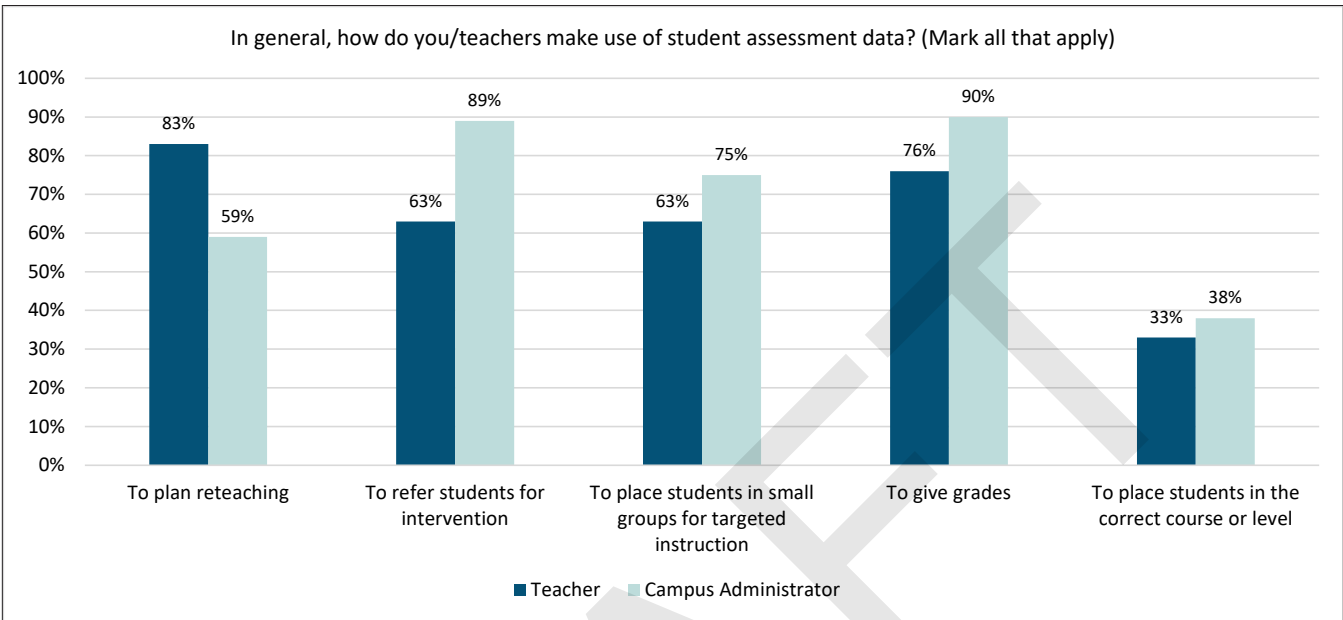
*Data Source: Online Teacher and Administrator Survey*

The majority of teachers responding indicated they use data to plan instruction frequently during a week. Only 7% of teachers report that they use data rarely or not at all. Administrators were much less likely than teachers to report that teachers were using assessment data daily.



Teachers and campus administrators were surveyed about how teachers make use of assessment data. Their responses are provided below.

**Exhibit 4.3.3: Teacher and Campus Administrator Reports of Data Use**



Data Source: Online Teacher and Administrator Survey

As indicated, discrepancies appear in perceptions regarding use of student assessment data for planning reteaching, referring students for intervention, placing students in small groups for targeted instruction, and giving grades. Teachers report using assessment to plan reteaching at higher rates than administrators. Campus administrators report that teachers use assessment to refer students for intervention, to place students in targeted instruction, and to give grades at higher rates than teachers report.

Seventy-six percent of teachers and 90% of administrators indicate that assessments are used to assign grades. The use of data to place students in courses or levels was the least frequent reported use of data. Thirty-three percent of teachers and 38% campus administrators reported such use.

Comments from surveys of building administrators indicate that data are being accessed and discussed in a variety of ways throughout the district.

- “We trained teachers on how to access their student data in Performance Matters as well as in Power Teacher. Teachers have direct access to all standardized testing data their students have ever had. I personally break down SBAC results into subsets for staff and do a PD that consists of analyzing student results more deeply, and then we use that data to plan unit instruction.”
- “We create data walls that are user friendly for teachers to use to target instruction.”
- “[Assessment] data is used to inform instruction and small groups with teachers for differentiation.”
- “[Assessment data are used] to allocate resources, make schedules, and to evaluate the SIP.”

Many teachers, however, reported frustrations with the current state of assessment in Stamford Public Schools. Comments below are representative of comments:

- “I often don’t have time to grade or check assessments; therefore, I don’t get to implement instruction properly using the assessment. Additionally, assessment is growing so burdensome, it often takes the place of instruction in some grade levels.”
- “The data is finalized too late to use in current instruction.”
- “Less assessments that impact quality instructional time. We have spent the first two months of school assessing our students. While it is important to have data, without quality instruction students will not make any progress.”
- “Stop with constant assessments. Students need to have other inputs in order to understand what they are reading.”
- “Let teachers teach—ditch the numerous assessments that take our time away from direct instruction.”

In summary, auditors report assessment data are unavailable in most core content areas, and auditors found no consistent process for school leaders to use and disseminate data. Although teachers report frequent use of assessment data to plan instruction, assessments are also being used to give grades. Many teachers expressed frustration with the amount of assessment, particularly in the elementary levels.

### ***Data Use for Program Evaluation***

Beyond the classroom, a key use of assessment data is to evaluate the effectiveness of programs in place throughout the district. Program evaluation is a key component of any effective education system. When programs are continually monitored, the system receives feedback that can be utilized to modify programs so that they can function more effectively and make a greater impact on student achievement, or selectively abandon those that are ineffective in meeting intended outcomes. When programs are not monitored, however, district staff may continue to use ineffective programs, resulting in outcomes that are detrimental to student learning. These programs may also continue to consume resources that could be allocated elsewhere to impact student achievement positively. In the absence of systematic assessment use and a complete scope of assessment instruments (see **Finding 4.2**), it is improbable, but not impossible, for program evaluation to occur. Without program evaluation, it becomes problematic to determine if a program is successful and if a program should be abandoned for lack of results.

### **Summary**

*Board Policy 6121* states, “The collection and analysis of district-level data from recurring formative and summative assessments should guide curriculum development and instructional decision-making.” This supports the effective use of data to provide information to staff as feedback regarding where improvements are needed. Assessments in ELA/reading and mathematics are administered in a majority of grade levels in Stamford Public Schools, but not in other content areas. The district has not established a system or process for the strategic use of formative and summative assessment data to promote its effectiveness as a tool in the improvement of teaching and learning. Further, the district has no program evaluation plan that provides expectations or that clarifies the process to evaluate programs for effectiveness of outcomes. The lack of a systemic evaluation program would increase the likelihood that assessments, both formative and summative, would occur across all grade levels and subject areas. Once

in place, this evaluation system can be used to inform decision making across all levels of the district, rather than decision making occurring at the building or department level (see **Recommendation 3**).

**Finding 4.4: Assessment trends show stable academic performance below the state average but above districts serving similar student populations; however, achievement gaps persist for some student groups.**

Student assessment data enable a school system's staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the written curriculum, as well as the instructional methods used to improve student achievement. The school board, district and school staffs, parents, and students can use comparative assessment data to determine how effective the schools and the district have been in educating students. Further these data enable the analyses of program effectiveness. Effective school systems are able to document high achievement among all students, and test scores should indicate a consistent pattern of improvement over time. Trend data can illuminate a trajectory that isolated annual data might not detect until years down the road, making reversal difficult or impossible. Without such data, leaders do not have the information necessary to assess the quality and consistency of student learning, program effectiveness, and organizational performance. Additionally, leaders do not have a sound basis for decisions about the design and the delivery of curriculum.

To identify student achievement trends, the audit team reviewed state and district policies and plans, test data reports, and related documents. Auditors also surveyed members of the district administration, campus administrators, teachers, and parents.

Overall, the auditors found that students in Stamford Public Schools are performing near the state average on the state-required assessments in English language arts and mathematics, and performing well above districts serving similar student populations. State assessment results, however, also revealed persistent gaps in achievement for economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and special education students.

The district provided the auditors with data from a variety of assessments. After reviewing publicly accessible data from assessments, the audit team elected to focus on *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)* results. The *SBAC* is a high-stakes criterion-referenced assessment used at the state and national levels to measure district success. Since these tests are completed by the majority of students, they provide the broadest information about performance. The *SBAC* includes annual assessments for grades 3 through 8 in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Data from 2015 to 2019 were analyzed, as *SBAC* assessments were not administered in 2020, and data from 2021 are not appropriate to use for comparisons between districts due to varied assessment contexts due to COVID-related changes in learning and assessment modalities.

Auditors organized data from these assessments into a series of exhibits designed to highlight the salient conditions and trends of the greatest benefit to curriculum managers. When possible, auditors analyzed assessment results for all students, for students identified as economically disadvantaged, students identified as English learners, and students who participate in special education programs. Research has indicated that these demographic characteristics present challenges for students in traditional learning environments.

Identifying a meaningful comparison point is critical to receiving useful feedback from assessment data. Stamford Public Schools serves students who differ demographically from the state of Connecticut as a whole, so the auditors identified a group of districts of similar size enrollment and percentage of economically disadvantaged students to create a more similar comparison group for Stamford Public Schools. Comparison districts are presented in the following exhibit.

**Exhibit 4.4.1: Connecticut, Comparison Districts, and Stamford Public Schools Demographics**

| Group Name   | Student Enrollment | Percent Economically Disadvantaged | Percent Minority | Percent English Learners | Percent Special Education |
|--|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Stamford Public Schools  | 16,600             | 59                                 | 70               | 14                       | 14                        |
| Connecticut  | 513,079            | 43                                 | 49               | 8                        | 16                        |
| District Comparison Group Average  | 12,710             | 57                                 | 71               | 18                       | 16                        |
| Bridgeport   | 20,311             | 72                                 | 88               | 20                       | 16                        |
| Norwalk  | 11,716             | 61                                 | 74               | 18                       | 15                        |
| Danbury  | 11,928             | 53                                 | 66               | 28                       | 14                        |
| New Britain  | 10,093             | 73                                 | 83               | 17                       | 22                        |
| West Hartford  | 9,502              | 27                                 | 44               | 6                        | 14                        |
| <i>Data Source: 2019-20 District Profile Report from <a href="https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Performance/EdSight">https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Performance/EdSight</a></i> |                    |                                    |                  |                          |                           |

As indicated above, 59% of Stamford Public Schools students were economically disadvantaged in 2019-20, as compared to the statewide rate of 43%. Stamford Public Schools also enrolled a larger share of minority students than the state: 70% to 49%, respectively. Finally, 14% of Stamford Public Schools students were identified as English learners (EL) compared to 8% statewide.

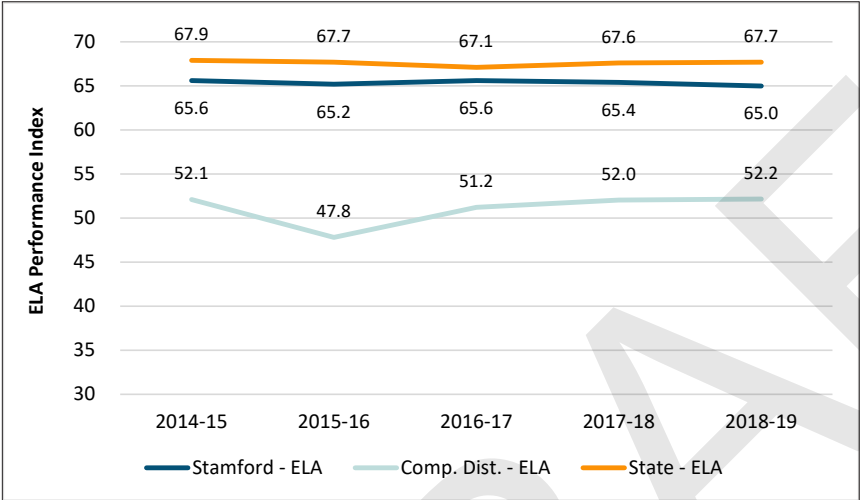
Stamford Public Schools enrolls a smaller percentage of economically disadvantaged students than three of the districts selected for comparison and a larger percentage of economically disadvantaged students than two of the selected districts. To generate the comparison group, auditors calculated a weighted average that reflects the contribution of each district relative to total district enrollment. For example, the weighted average of percent economically disadvantaged represents the number of students in each district who are economically disadvantaged (calculated by multiplying the percentage by the total enrollment), summed and divided by the sum of the total enrollment of the districts. In contrast to a simple average, which would give each district the same influence in the calculation regardless of enrollment size, the weighted average more accurately represents the combined population of the comparison districts. Compared to the group average, Stamford Public Schools is somewhat larger, serves a similar percentage of economically disadvantaged students (59% to 57%), a similar percentage of minority students (70% to 71%), and slightly smaller percentages of English learners (14% to 18%) and Special Education students (14% to 16%). The use of the comparison district group will allow feedback on Stamford Public Schools student performance compared to student performance in similar districts.

**District Performance on State Exams**

The primary strategic goal of the Stamford Public Schools is to “Provide an education that cultivates productive habits of mind, body and heart in every student.” In addition, the district’s 2017-2022 strategic plan contains Cradle2Career key outcomes, including “All Stamford children will be reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade,” and “All Stamford children will (be)...performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math in both fifth and eighth grades.”

Although data provided to auditors were insufficient to measure the “habits of mind, body and heart” directly, state assessment results can illuminate how students are performing on English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments. A District Performance Index (DPI) is the average performance of students in a subject area on the state summative assessments. The DPI ranges from 0-100. A DPI is reported for all students tested in a district and for students in each individual student group. Connecticut’s ultimate target for a DPI is 75. The performance index of Stamford Public Schools, comparison group districts, and the state overall on ELA and mathematics exams from 2014-15 through 2018-19 is presented in the next two exhibits. Performance is presented by subject and represents all students.

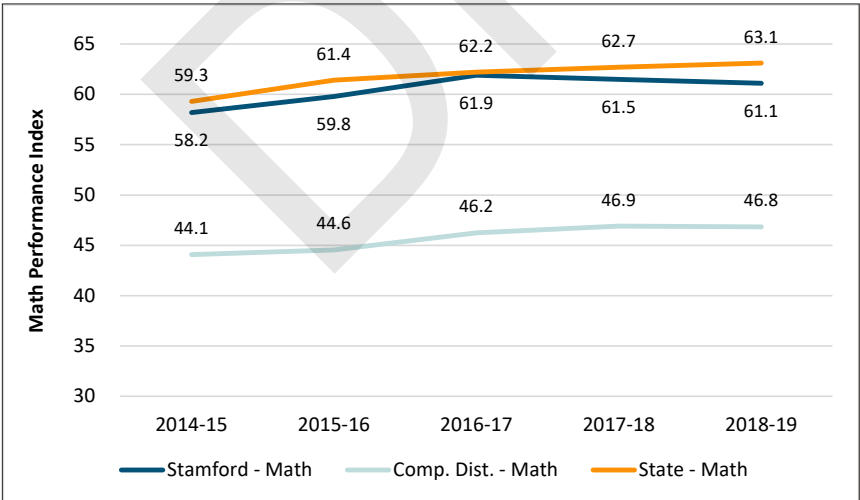
**Exhibit 4.4.2: ELA Performance Index: Stamford Public Schools, Comparison Districts, and Connecticut, 2014-2019**



The Stamford Public Schools ELA performance index has remained stable since 2015. Stamford has performed slightly below the state on the *SBAC* ELA exams by 1.5 to 2.7 points since 2015. Stamford Public Schools has outperformed the comparison districts on the *SBAC* ELA exams by 12.8 to 17.4 points since 2015.

Data Source: District Performance Index Reports, 2014 through 2019

**Exhibit 4.4.3: Mathematics Performance Index: Stamford Public Schools, Comparison Districts, and Connecticut, 2014-2019**



The Stamford Public Schools math performance index has increased since 2015, and remained relatively consistent since 2017. Stamford Public Schools has performed slightly below the state on the *SBAC* mathematics exams by 0.3 to 2.0 points since 2015. Stamford Public Schools has consistently outperformed the comparison districts on the *SBAC* mathematics exams by 14.1 to 15.7 points since 2015.

Data Source: District Performance Index Reports, 2014 through 2019

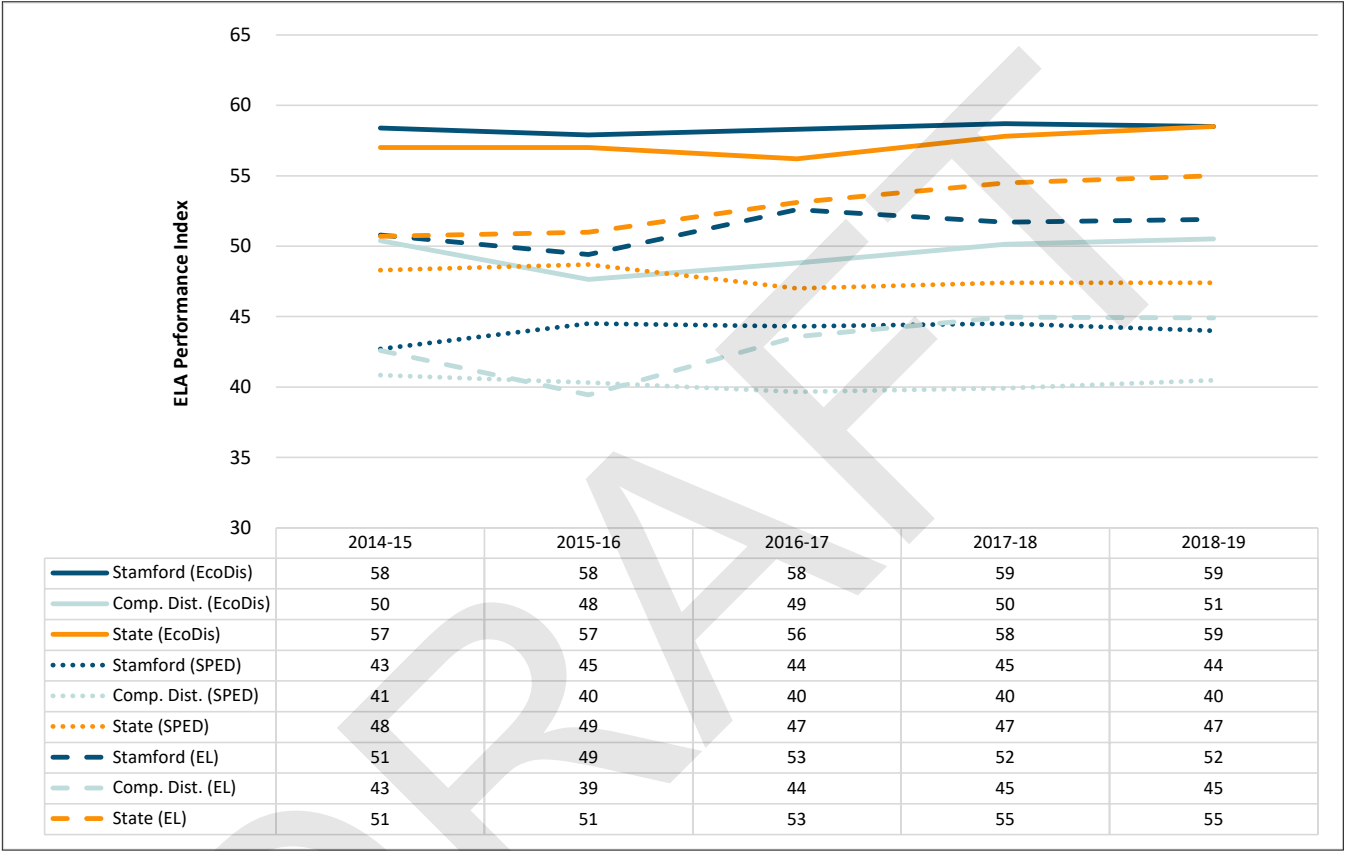
Auditors completed an analysis of Stamford Public Schools, the comparison districts group, and statewide performance on *SBAC* exams for economically disadvantaged, English learners, and special education



students. Recent data from assessments are organized into a series of exhibits designed to highlight the salient conditions and trends of the greatest benefit to curriculum managers.

The ELA performance index is presented in the following exhibit for economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students participating in special education services.

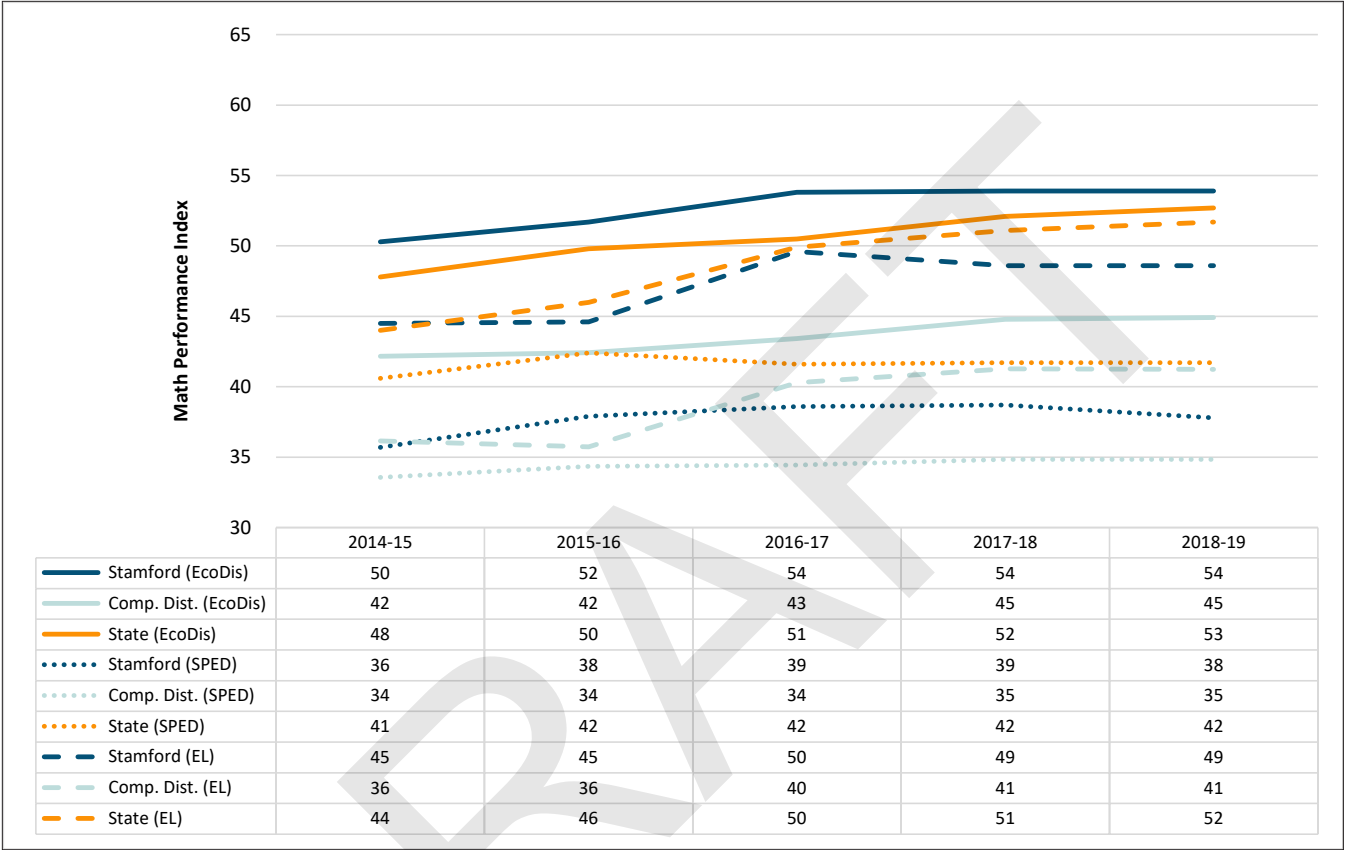
**Exhibit 4.4.4: ELA Performance Index of Student Groups: Stamford Public Schools, Comparison Districts, and Connecticut, 2014-2019**



As indicated above, the ELA performance index of Stamford Public Schools economically disadvantaged students across all grades is similar to the state performance index. The ELA performance index of Stamford Public Schools Special Education students falls between the state and comparison district performance indices. The ELA performance index of Stamford Public Schools English learner students is slightly lower than the state, but above the ELA performance index of the comparison district group.

The mathematics performance index of Stamford Public Schools, comparison districts, and all Connecticut students is presented below for economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students receiving special education services.

**Exhibit 4.4.5: Mathematics Performance Index of Student Groups: Stamford Public Schools, Comparison Districts, and Connecticut, 2014-2019**

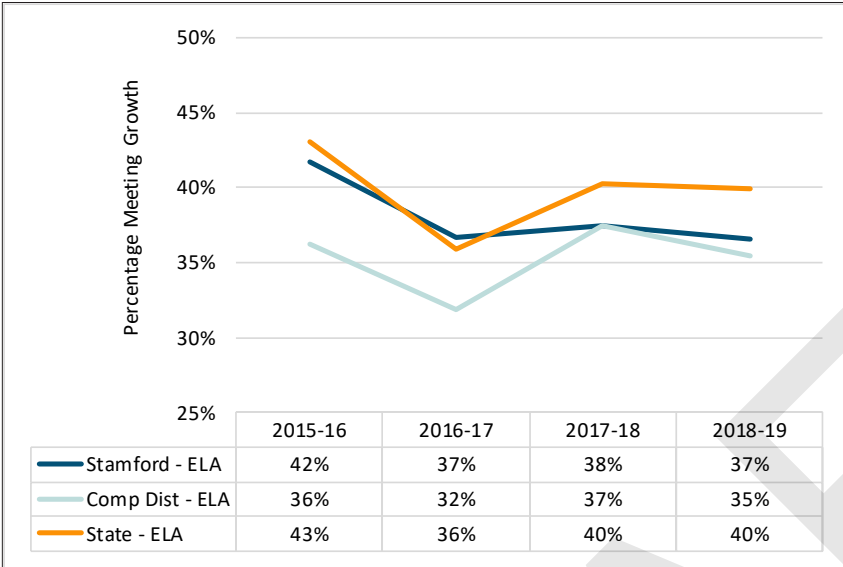


As indicated, the mathematics performance index of Stamford Public Schools economically disadvantaged students across all grades is consistently higher than the state performance index. The mathematics performance index of Stamford Public Schools Special Education students falls between the state and the comparison district performance indices. The mathematics performance index of Stamford Public Schools English learner students is slightly lower than the state, but above the mathematics performance index of the comparison district group.

The district performance index is a snapshot of how well students are performing in ELA and mathematics, but auditors also examined the change in achievement scores for the same students between two or more points in time. How much students are improving over time is captured by the Growth Rate, which reflects the percentage of students meeting or exceeding annual growth targets.

The percentage of Stamford Public Schools, comparison district, and all Connecticut students meeting or exceeding annual growth targets in ELA and mathematics is presented in the next two exhibits.

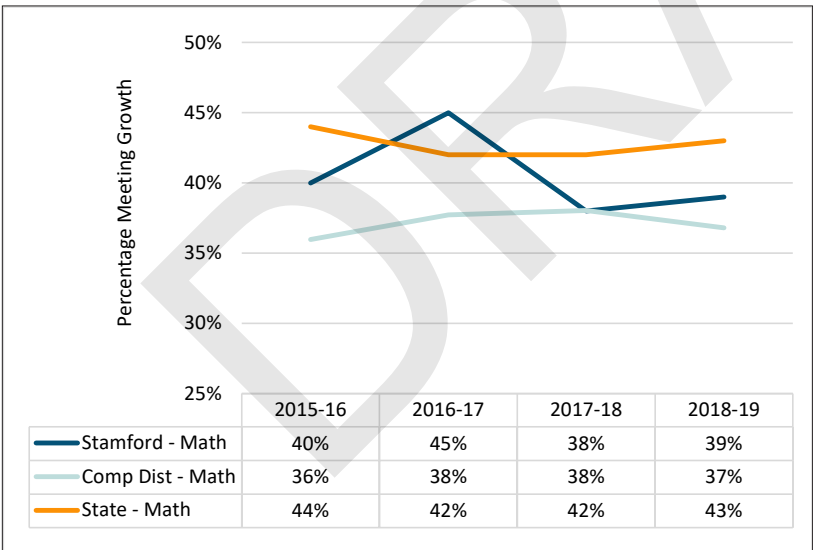
**Exhibit 4.4.6: Percent Meeting ELA Growth Targets: Stamford Public Schools, Comparison Districts, and Connecticut, 2015-2019**



The percentage of Stamford Public Schools students meeting or exceeding annual growth goals in ELA has declined since 2016, from 42% to 37%. Stamford Public Schools has fewer students meeting annual growth targets than the state in all years but 2016-17. Stamford Public Schools students are more likely to meet annual growth targets in ELA than students in comparison districts; however, the gap has narrowed over time.

Data Source: District Performance Index Reports, 2014 through 2019

**Exhibit 4.4.7: Percent Meeting Math Growth Targets: Stamford Public Schools, Comparison Districts, and Connecticut, 2015-2019**



The percentage of Stamford Public Schools students meeting or exceeding annual growth goals in mathematics has varied since 2016, from a high of 45% to a low of 38%. In all years but 2016-17, Stamford Public Schools has a smaller percentage of students meeting annual growth targets in mathematics than the state. Stamford Public Schools students are more likely to meet annual growth targets in mathematics than students in comparison districts; however, the gap has narrowed over time.

Data Source: District Performance Index Reports, 2014 through 2019

Overall, data trends reflect Stamford Public Schools student performance and growth in ELA and mathematics is similar to the performance of Connecticut students overall and better than students in comparison districts. In both ELA and mathematics, economically disadvantaged students from Stamford Public Schools slightly outperform economically disadvantaged students from the state as a whole, and substantially outperform economically disadvantaged students from comparison districts. Stamford Public Schools English learners are outperforming similar students in comparison districts in ELA and mathematics, but recently underperformed EL students statewide. The performance of Stamford Public

Schools students participating in special education programs is lower than the state as a whole, but higher than that of students in comparable districts.

Persistent achievement gaps between student groups exist. Predictive information that can be used to focus on closing the achievement gaps between student subgroups is being provided to the district. The auditors ran a years-to-parity (YTP) analysis, a standard method of looking at longitudinal student performance data to estimate the time (in years) required to close the gap (attain parity), based on the current rate, without focused interventions. For a full description of the years to parity analysis, please see **Finding 3.3**.

### **Summary**

Stamford Public Schools student performance on state-required assessments in ELA and mathematics over the past five years is consistent with state performance and above the performance of districts serving students with similar demographics. The gaps in achievement for economically disadvantaged students, English learner students, and special education students are substantial and persisting. Using current practices, achievement gaps will not close within the educational lifetime of the student, and in some cases, gaps are increasing (see **Recommendation 3**).

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# FOCUS AREA FIVE: The School District Has Improved Productivity.

Productivity refers to the relationship between system input and output. A school system meeting this focus area of the CMSi Curriculum Audit™ is able to demonstrate consistently improved pupil outcomes, even in the face of diminishing resources. Improved productivity results when a school system is able to create a consistent level of congruence between major variables in achieving enhanced results and in controlling costs.

## What the Auditors Expected to Find in the Stamford Public Schools:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Focus Area Five: Productivity</b></p> <p>Under Focus Area Five, auditors examine the degree to which school systems are equipped to attain goals and improve the delivery of the educational program and services while maintaining (or decreasing) current resources. The attainment of improved productivity in a school is a complex process dependent on the balance of tightly-held organizational structure and expectations system-wide, with flexibility at individual schools.</p> | <p><b>Common indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planned and actual congruence among curricular objectives, results, and financial allocations;</li><li>• A financial database and network that can track costs to results, provide sufficient fiduciary control, and is used as a viable database in making policy and operational decisions;</li><li>• Specific means that have been selected or modified and implemented to attain better results in schools over a specified time period;</li><li>• A planned series of interventions that have raised pupil performance levels over time and maintained those levels within the same cost parameters as in the past;</li><li>• School facilities that are well-kept, sufficient, safe, orderly, and conducive to effective delivery of the instructional program;</li><li>• Support systems that function in systemic ways; and</li><li>• District and school climate that is conducive to continual improvement.</li></ul> |
|---|---|

## Overview of What the Auditors Found in the Stamford Public Schools:

This section is an overview of the findings that follow in the area of **Focus Area Five**. Details follow within separate findings.

Financial decision-making and budget development processes lack cost-benefit analyses and are not adequately linked to curricular goals and priorities. While a budgetary planning process is in place, the auditors found an absence of direct linkages among department goals and budget priorities. Additionally, participation in the budget planning processes at the district level lacks the full inclusion of stakeholders.

Stamford Public Schools has taken recent steps to address aging buildings and facility concerns. Overall, the facility planning process satisfactorily meets the CMIM criteria and is being actively utilized to help guide major renovation, remodeling, and new construction in the district to address future facility needs. However, facility planning currently lacks elements of connectedness between the education mission of the district and facility design to enhance and support the learning environment.



**Finding 5.1: Although district budgeting is linked to educational priorities, budgeting is not tightly aligned to the district’s curricular goals and outcomes, nor are there adequate cost-benefit analyses within the financial network to assure maximum productivity.**

A school system’s productivity is enhanced by budgetary decisions based on program needs, goals, and priorities. Productivity is improved when clear linkages exist between the curriculum and the budget. These increases in productivity are achieved through cost-benefit analyses and require a clear delineation of costs compared to documented system gains, or results obtained from allocations. Such linkages provide for a budgetary process that is driven by curriculum needs, priorities, and goals. Linkages between the budget and curriculum are critical and document how the district allocates fiscal resources to support and implement its programs. Thus, the budget is the numerical expression of the curriculum and should mirror program priorities. A budget development process focused on supporting the school system’s highest priorities is always critical, and is especially important when that system is faced with fiscal constraints requiring programs and services to be reduced. When the budget does not reflect curricular goals and priorities, it is less likely that students will receive the educational benefits intended by the organization’s leaders.

To determine the extent of the connection between curriculum and budget in SPS, auditors interviewed board members and district employees, including the Superintendent, Director of Finance, and board of education members. They also reviewed district documents, including fiscal reports, presentations, board policies, job descriptions, and procedures used by the district to prepare, implement, monitor, and evaluate the budget.

Documents reviewed include the following: board policies, various job descriptions, SPS Budget Presentation for Teaching and Learning (PowerPoint), SPS Budget Presentation for School Development (PowerPoint), SPS Budget Overview, SPS White Budget Book, and SPS District and School Strategic Improvement Plans.

Auditors determined that financial decision-making and budget development processes lack cost-benefit analyses and are not adequately linked to curricular goals and priorities. While a budgetary planning process is in place, the auditors found an absence of direct linkages among department goals and budget priorities. No formal, routine effort has been made to link student achievement or program performance feedback to budgetary decisions. Additionally, participation in the budget planning processes at the district level lacks the full inclusion of stakeholders.

The 2021 Budget Presentation for Teaching and Learning includes the following directive to administrative staff to guide them in developing their budget proposals and describes an abbreviated version of the budget process:

*The budget process for the district began in October 2020 with the Superintendent providing general guidelines to all administrative staff to begin developing a budget for fiscal year 2021-22 that addresses program needs in a fiscally responsible manner. The budget would need to provide adequate resources to fund high growth budget areas such as Special Education and Facility Maintenance as well as the high growth rate in student enrollment that the district is currently experiencing. Starting in December 2020 with input from Central Staff and Administrators (including principals and assistant principals), the Superintendent’s Operating Budget Request was assembled. At the same time, meetings were held with cabinet members to review all areas of the budget, to link budget requests to district goals, and determine priorities for 2021-22. Each program and building were thoroughly reviewed for staffing needs, trends, and alignment with district goals.*

Auditors found board policies related to district budgeting did not meet CMIM expectations, as described in **Exhibit 1.1.6**. Relevant policies indicate that the board “develop the school budget annually by translating board policy into terms of dollars and cents.” Also, “Equivalent Funding in all schools with the same grade levels, state and local funds will be used to provide: comparable services; an equivalent level of professional staff and administration; equivalent curriculum and instructional materials, books and supplies. Any additional funds, including Chapter I grants, will be used to supplement or increase the level of state and local support.” And, “Request the resources necessary for the achievement of the goals and objectives through the budget process; Evaluating the degree to which the goals and objectives are accomplished.” However, no direction is provided in either policy or regulation as to how that is to be accomplished.

The job description for the Director of Finance requires a “Commitment to creating schools that provide an education that cultivates productive habits of mind, body, and heart in every student.” Of the three job descriptions for the various associate superintendent positions, none include a role in budgeting. Only the high school principal’s job description mentions budgeting as a function of the job. Job descriptions for the middle school and elementary school principal do not mention budgeting.

The auditors used six criteria for a curriculum-driven budget to assess the quality of the Stamford Public Schools’ budget processes. These criteria and the auditors’ assessments are shown below.

**Exhibit 5.1.1: Components of a Performance-based Budget and Adequacy of Use in the Budget Development Process**

| Performance-based Budget Criteria   | Auditors’ Rating |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Tangible, demonstrable connections are evident between assessment of operational curriculum effectiveness and allocations of resources.  | P*               |
| 2. Rank ordering of program components is provided to permit flexibility in budget expansion, reduction, or stabilization based on changing needs or priorities.  |                  |
| 3. Each budget request or submittal shall be described so as to permit evaluation of consequences of funding or non-funding in terms of performance or results.   |                  |
| 4. Cost benefits of components in curriculum programming are delineated in budget decision making.  |                  |
| 5. Budget requests compete for funding based upon evaluation of criticality of need and relationship to achievement of curriculum effectiveness.  |                  |
| 6. Priorities in the budget are set by participation of key educational staff in the allocation and decision-making process. Teacher and principal suggestions and ideas for budget priorities are reflected and incorporated in budgeting decisions. |                  |
| <b>Total Met</b>  | <b>0/6</b>       |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>   | <b>0%</b>        |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met   |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.  |                  |
| ©2021 CMSi  |                  |

As shown above, five components of a curriculum-driven budget were not met and one was partially met. As a result, the budget planning process in SPS fails to meet the audit expectation of 70% for adequacy. A further discussion of the six criteria follows.

Budget allocations are not connected to assessments of program effectiveness required by Criterion 1 primarily because a comprehensive system of program evaluation does not exist in the district, nor

is there a district expectation in policy or practice to determine the effectiveness of specific programs. Additionally, some preferences in the 2021-22 budget proposal are linked to restorative student support and adding several Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA). However, links to tangible monitoring of the impact on district curriculum are not provided.

The job description for the Director of Finance cites several areas of budgeting responsibility, including developing a district budget related to educational goals, detailed analysis of current year expenditures, and monitoring federal and state monies. However, no mention is made of prioritizing of budgeting requests aligned to criticality of need (Criteria 2 and 3). Nor is this expectation expressed in other job descriptions, policy, or presentations.

The district does not have processes to conduct meaningful cost-benefit analyses. While some data systems are in place, there is no evidence of cost-benefit analysis occurring. In discussion with district staff, auditors learned that program planning and district fiscal planning essentially occur separately. Auditors learned through a review of district and building improvement plans that links are made between programs and the district mission of educating the mind, body, and hearts. No explanation is given for how this connection will be evaluated or monitored (Criteria 4 and 5).

While not directed in policy, staff participation in district budget creation does not always include key stakeholders. In response to a question about who participates in the development of the district budget, 25% of building administrators indicated that it is “Mostly developed or determined by a team representing various district stakeholders (e.g., board members, district and building personnel, parents/community members).” One board member said that principals are left out of the budget process” (Criteria 6).

In summary, the auditors concluded that district policies and procedures to direct the budget development processes do not meet CMIM criteria. Financial decision-making and budget development processes lack any type of cost-benefit analysis and are not adequately linked to program effectiveness to provide maximum educational productivity (see **Recommendation 6**).



*The spacious and modern playground at Strawberry Hill is an example of the facility improvements at SPS.*

**Finding 5.2: The facility planning process meets CMSI criteria overall and is being actively utilized to help guide major renovation, remodeling, and new construction in the district to alleviate facility needs in the future.**

Providing adequate educational facilities is a major responsibility of the board of education and district administration. The learning environment of a school district must be clean, safe, and pleasant to support the effective delivery of the curriculum. The design of the school facility, adequacy of space, and flexibility of use should support and enhance the instructional program. Facilities need to be designed and maintained in a manner that conveys to students, parents, staff, and community members that the educational setting is a high priority.



Long-range facilities planning is imperative for effective use of funding and real estate to meet both current and future student needs. Planning should be based on the careful analysis of all factors that impact the learning environment, such as enrollment trends, curriculum needs, demographic changes, instructional practices, special educational requirements, technology advancements, and the support services needed to maintain the system. Long-range planning ensures that a district is prepared financially for the task of maintaining the quality of the existing facilities and the possibility of future construction or renovation.

Auditors reviewed board policies, facilities planning documents, and other documents related to school buildings and grounds. The audit team visited each of the district's schools and many classrooms where instruction was taking place to gather information on the learning environment and any special problems or impediments that may exist in facilities. The auditors attended particularly to overall maintenance, physical atmosphere, accessibility, safety, and use of the buildings. Interviews were conducted with board members, administrators, and teachers.

The auditors concluded that SPS is in the initial planning stages for potential major building renovation and construction to address the problem of aging facilities. The master facilities plan is in the process of being reviewed and is under board study. Auditors elected to complete a detailed examination of the facilities planning process despite the district meeting audit criteria overall. The SPS and the City of Stamford participate in a unique cooperative relationship in regard to facilities and finances. As such, neither is wholly independent from the other, and enormous projects, like the upcoming facilities improvement, would benefit from an unbiased analysis to determine if any deficiencies are present.

Two board policies, *Policy 9011* and *Policy 3510*, were presented for review related to facilities. Both policies are directed at building maintenance and cleanliness. No policies were focused on facility design to support educational programming.

One job description was presented to auditors relevant to the area of facilities, Director of Facilities – Maintenance. Another position, Director of Facilities – Capital, was recently created by the district, but no job description was presented for review. Auditors learned through district personnel that the Director of Facilities – Capital was recently created and filled to lead the development and implementation of the capital improvement/facilities project.

Auditors reviewed several documents related to facilities and maintenance, planning for facility needs, and enrollment. The following exhibit lists the documents presented to auditors.



*Lacking adequate storage, professionals at Apples Early Childhood Center stash materials in the hallway between student lockers.*

**Exhibit 5.2.1: Facility Documents Reviewed by Auditors**

| Document   | Date  |
|--|---|
| SLAM Master Planning Report – Executive Summary  | 4.2022                                      |
| Educational Facility Assessments, Demographic Study & Master Planning (PowerPoint)                   | 3.2022                                      |
| Educational Facility Assessments, Demographic Study & Master Planning (Community Meeting PowerPoint) | 2.2022                                      |
| Long-Term Facilities Committee Community Engagement Forum Minutes                                    | 2.28.2022; 3.2.2022;<br>3.7.2022; 3.10.2022 |
| Various Board Policies   | Varies                                      |
| Job Descriptions   | 2020  |

No single comprehensive facilities plan was presented to auditors. In the absence of a single facilities plan, the above documents were analyzed against the components shown below:

**Exhibit 5.2.2: Comparison of Facility Planning Efforts to Audit Components of Comprehensive Long-Range Facilities Planning**

| Components of a Comprehensive Long-Range Facilities Plan  | Auditors' Rating |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Philosophical statements that reflect community aspirations and the educational mission of the district and their relationship to short- and long-range facilities goals                                     |                  |
| 2. Enrollment projections that take into account any known circumstances that may change the pupil population   | X                |
| 3. The current organizational patterns of the district and identification of possible organizational changes necessary to support the educational program   | X                |
| 4. Identification of educational programs considered by designers of capital projects for renovation or addition of school facilities   | P*               |
| 5. A detailed evaluation of each facility, including assessment of structural integrity, mechanical integrity and efficiency, energy efficiency, operations and maintenance, and health and safety requirements | X                |
| 6. Prioritization of needs for renovation of existing facilities and the provision of additional facilities   | X                |
| 7. Cost analysis of potential capital projects to meet the educational needs of the district, including identification of revenues associated with capital construction   | X                |
| 8. Procedures for the involvement of all stakeholders of the school community in the development and evaluation of the long-range facilities plan   | X                |
| <b>Total Met</b>  | <b>6/8</b>       |
| <b>Percentage Met</b>   | <b>75%</b>       |
| Key: X = Met, P = Partially Met, Blank = Not Met  |                  |
| *Partial ratings are counted as not met when determining overall percentage of adequacy.  |                  |
| ©2021 CMSi  |                  |

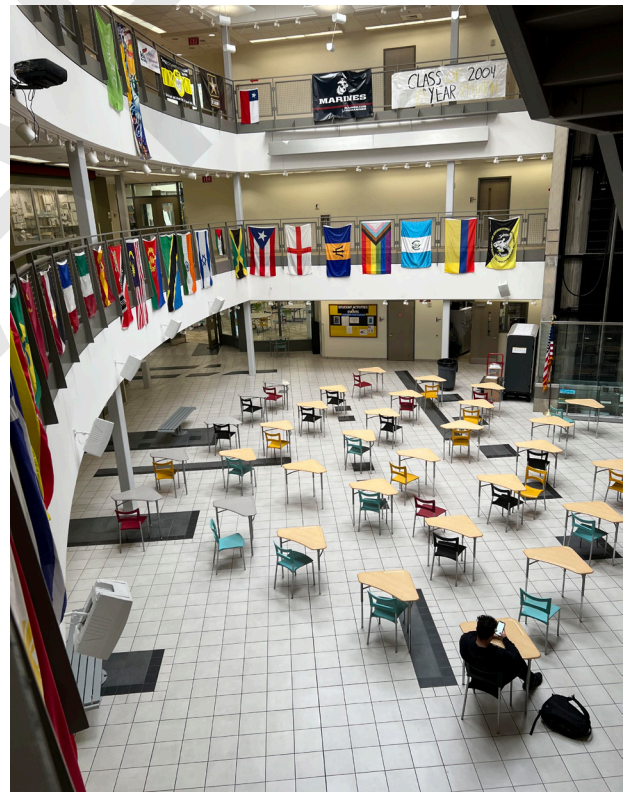
As shown above, the documents presented to auditors for review exceed 70% adequacy, and, therefore, satisfy the audit expectation for a comprehensive, long-range facilities master plan. The following narrative provides a brief discussion of each component and the auditors' assessment.

For Component 1, *Board Policies 9011* and *3505* discuss the need for adequate facilities in reference to safety, security, cleanliness, energy conservation, maintenance, and support of district operation.

However, there is no mention of educational mission or how facilities might be utilized to support or enhance the district mission in any of the provided documents. The component was rated as not met.

Without a philosophical statement connecting facility expectations to the educational programming mission of the district (see Component 1) it becomes difficult if not impossible for facility planners to incorporate facility design to support the educational mission of the district (Component 4). As a result, while planning documents provide a thorough and comprehensive survey of the structural integrity and capacity expectations of the district, there is no connectivity between the facilities and how they will be utilized to support the educational programming in the district. As part of the SLAM Master Planning Report, identification of priorities is listed. Rigorous curriculum is mentioned, but no description of how that translates into the design of facilities. During community feedback sessions, community members requests were expressed to include art education space. During interviews with district administrators, auditors were told that design specifications had not yet been discussed, and the topic of the impact of curriculum and instructional priorities had not been part of the initial facility planning discussion. As a result, there is no systemic plan or institutionalized process to link educational program needs to facility design. Component 4 was rated as partially met.

Components 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 were all met through the SLAM Master Planning Report. The District Enrollment Forecast contains 10-year enrollment projections, from 2022 until 2032. Projections are included for low and moderate scenario growth possibilities. Enrollment studies and demographic housing patterns within the district have been utilized to determine the following: placement of new school construction to meet future housing patterns, remodeling and expansion of several buildings, and construction of new elementary/middle schools. The report includes a description of each school building, its infrastructure and analysis of mechanical systems, system efficiencies, and health and safety requirements. A prioritized list of options to alleviate the facility issues with potential costs and benefits of facility options is provided. The report provides an analysis for the cost and revenues needed to facilitate upgrades, maintenance, and potential building repairs, remodeling, and new construction. Additionally, multi-year costs and revenue sources were developed by the district to achieve desired facility project goals. Overseeing this process is the Long-Term Facilities Committee, which consists of over 40 members from various stakeholder groups, from board members to community members.



*The atrium at AITE provides a welcoming setting for school activities.*

### **Facility Condition**

Audit team members conducted a visual inspection of all buildings. This tour included an examination of many classrooms, media centers, cafeterias, all-purpose rooms, offices, work areas, restroom facilities, and a general inspection of the grounds. Depending on the age of the school, auditors found the buildings



to be well maintained and very clean. Limitations such as an inability to provide technology access, and air conditioning and ventilation issues diminish the quality of the educational environment. Lack of adequate storage was noted in a few facilities. Overall, the facilities were well-presented and welcoming.

The auditors concluded that the Stamford Public Schools has taken recent steps to address aging buildings and facility concerns. Overall, the facility planning process satisfactorily meets audit expectations and is being actively utilized to help guide major renovation, remodeling, and new construction in the district to address future facility needs. However, facility planning lacks elements of connectedness between the educational mission of the district and facility design to enhance and support the learning environment (see **Recommendation 6**).

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## Recommendations

Based on the four streams of data derived from interviews, documents, online surveys, and site visits, the CMSi Curriculum Audit™ Team has developed a set of recommendations to address its findings shown under each of the focus areas of the audit.

In the case of the findings, they have been triangulated, i.e., multiple sources of data serve to support the auditors' conclusions. In the case of the recommendations, those put forth in this section are representative of the auditors' best professional judgments regarding how to address the problems that surfaced in the audit.

The recommendations are presented in the order of their criticality for initiating system-wide improvements. The recommendations also recognize and differentiate between the policy and monitoring responsibilities of the board of education, and the operational and administrative duties of the superintendent of schools.

Where the CMSi audit team views a problem as wholly or partly a policy and monitoring matter, the recommendations are formulated for the board. Where the problem is distinctly an operational or administrative matter, the recommendations are directed to the superintendent as the chief executive officer of the school system. In many cases, the CMSi audit team directs recommendations to both the board and the superintendent, because it is clear that policy and operations are related, and both entities are involved in a proposed change. In some cases, no recommendations are made to the superintendent when only policy is involved or none to the board when the recommendations deal only with administration.

Audit recommendations are presented as follows: the overarching goals for the board and/or the superintendent, followed by the specific objectives to carry out the overarching goals. The latter are designated "Governance Functions" and "Administrative Functions."

**Recommendation 1: Adopt and implement updated, revised, or new board policies to provide clear direction for the educational program and operational functions and to clarify expectations regarding organizational coordination and decision making. Redesign the organizational chart to adhere to the audit principles of sound organizational management. Strengthen and update job descriptions to support curricular linkages and reflect impending organizational changes.**

A comprehensive set of school board policies is necessary to guide the management of a school system and express the expectations and intentions of the elected body legally charged with governance of the school district. Current, sound policies provide an updated legal framework for school district program operations and help created educational focus for ongoing decision making at schools and at the district level. Policies are relied upon to be a source of reference for district management as they deal with recurring issues and make operational decisions to promote consistency of administrative practices and cohesion of organizational functions. Administrative regulations that outline for central and site leaders the expectations in policy implementation are beneficial for effective coordination.

Likewise, quality control lies at the heart of a well-managed educational system. School systems demonstrate quality control through a clear set of policies that establish direction, coherent planning processes focused on system goals, and a functional table of organization and related job descriptions that set the structure to support achievement of mission and goals.

Auditors determined that Stamford Public Schools lacks sufficient mechanisms for quality control in the areas of policy and organizational structure to realize the district's strategic direction.

The current board policies for SPS do not provide adequate direction or communicate clear expectations, particularly in the areas of district vision and accountability, and productivity (see **Findings 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 4.1, and 5.1**). The 2010 adopted *Board Policy 6121, Standards-Based Curriculum* provides guidance for overall district curriculum decision making, and also a great amount of detail concerning curriculum management within the district. However, auditors learned that this policy is not consistently used in planning curriculum. The current policies address few elements required of a data-driven planning function, or use of data for decision making (see **Findings 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 4.1, and 5.1**). Administrative regulations and procedural documents used to interpret and operationalize board policies are minimal.

The auditors recommended actions address the primary needs in the area of policies and regulations as identified through audit analysis (see **Finding 1.1**). Additional recommendations in this report also identify specific areas of policy weakness. The actions need to be addressed during the next 6 to 12 months in order to establish clear parameters for management of the educational program, operations, and related functions, to support effective coordination of responsibilities, and to communicate expectations regarding the follow-up actions recommended in this report.

### **Board Policy**

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.1.1:** Request the superintendent to prepare and present for review and adoption drafts of new policies or revised policies that will meet the criteria outlined in **Exhibits 1.1.2 through 1.1.6**, and address policy deficiencies pointed out in each of the findings and accompanying recommendations within this report. Address these revisions as a priority in order to establish clear communication of direction for educational program management and sound operation of the district. If necessary, contract with the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, the National School Boards Association, or other creditable agency to assist with this task.

**G.1.2:** Establish an ongoing policy review and update schedule to avoid policies being outdated and ignored. Incorporate Connecticut Association of Boards of Education legal information as legislative changes occur, and include language needed to specify clearly the local board's additional intent and expectations.

**G.1.3:** Request the superintendent to establish a mechanism to ensure all administrators' understanding of policies and the expectation that policies be followed throughout the district. Likewise, have the superintendent prepare administrative procedures for consistent implementation of policies.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.1.1:** Assist the board in implementing **G.1.1 through G.1.3** above. Provide draft policy language that offers clarity of expectations where needed to meet the audit criteria in **Exhibits 1.1.2 through 1.1.6** and other findings within the audit report.

**A.1.2:** Identify the policies most in need of specificity for central and site administrative coordination and consistency, and develop administrative regulations/procedures for those policies. Examples are: processes for development of curriculum; expectations of curriculum monitoring, including classroom

walk-through procedures; procedures for implementation; and monitoring of the effects of professional development.

**A.1.3:** Provide updated policies and regulations/procedures to all administrators, with copies available for staff at the work sites, electronically or otherwise. Update policies and procedural documents on the district website as soon as feasible to enable ready internal and external access to the most current policies and regulations. Ensure that the publicized documentation of policies refers to the most recent review and approval for continuation or the most recent revision of previously existing policies.

**A.1.4:** Include discussion of updated policies and regulations in administrative meetings as revisions are completed, highlighting particular areas of policy at the regular meetings; monitor for consistent implementation at all campuses.

**A.1.5:** Establish a system to maintain policy congruence with current state and federal laws, regulations, and other requirements as well as accuracy of local board intent in critical areas such as curriculum instruction, student assessment, and program evaluation.

**A.1.6:** Develop and implement a strategy for clarifying points of decision making in critical areas such as curriculum, program adoption, assessment, professional development, instructional technology, and determining exceptions to program guidelines. Using administrative team meetings, engage in activities such as matrix design by focusing first on decisions, especially noting those most uncertain as to the point of responsibility. Within the matrix, identify both perceptions and intent for those decisions to establish clarity, and create a document to help ensure uniform understanding among units within the system.

**Table of Organization and Job Descriptions**

Successful organizations have an organizational chart and accompanying job descriptions that provide the structure and working parameters for a well-organized, focused, and efficient administrative team. Quality control and productivity depend on clear communication of the responsibilities and relationships of the organization. Effective relationships among leadership positions support the smooth operation of schools and keep focus on students and learning.

Auditors determined that the district table of organization is ineffective in providing oversight to the board of education. More specifically, the table of organization violates the rules of organizational management in the areas of span of control, logical grouping, scalar relationships, chain of command, separation of line and staff function, and full inclusion. Auditors determined that job descriptions did not meet audit criteria in all areas (see **Finding 1.2**).

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.1.4:** Request the superintendent to revise the SPS Organizational Chart, resolving issues cited by the auditors (see **Finding 1.2**).

**G.1.5:** Request the superintendent to submit annually a proposal for continuation or adjustment for organizational chart to the board review.

**G.1.6:** Request the superintendent to begin the process of reviewing and updating job descriptions, resolving issues cited by the auditors and impending changes due to audit organizational recommendations (see **Finding 1.2**).

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.1.7:** Revise the SPS Organizational Chart to comply with audit criteria for sound organizational management (see **Exhibit 1.2.2**). Consider the recommended organizational chart presented in **Appendix E** that includes the following elements:

**Scalar Relationships:** Arrangement of positions with similar responsibilities and compensation are placed on the same horizontal plane.

- Clean up the randomness of placement on the table. Each level of responsibility should have its own horizontal plane.
  - Level 1: Top Administration and Leadership Team
  - Level 2: Executive Directors/Principals
  - Level 3: Directors
  - Level 4: Teachers, Coordinators, and Assistant Directors
- Visually elevate Chief Academic Officer to slightly above the Associate Superintendents to reflect level of responsibility and remuneration.

**Full Inclusion:** All persons working within the district carrying out its essential functions should be depicted on the table of organization. Adding the following positions presently missing from the table will also correct the Span of Control and Chain of Command issues cited in **Finding 1.2**:

- Teachers
- Assistant Principals

**Line and Staff Function:** Those administrators carrying out the primary mission of the district should not be confused with those supporting it.

- Limit direct line reporting to the Associate Superintendents to those personnel in line positions.
- Reassign reporting of curriculum writers to the Executive Director of Curriculum Design.
- Reassign those in staff positions to the Executive Director of Instruction, Assessment, and Student Services.

**Logical Grouping:** The clustering of similar duties and tasks is employed in order to keep supervisory needs to a minimum. Place employees into discreet categories defined as either line or staff positions. Line positions are primarily those designated as responsible for implementing the curriculum (principals and teachers), writing and developers of curriculum, assessment services, operations, and finance.

**A.1.8:** Review the revised organizational chart with the board of education, and submit it for review and discussion.

**A.1.9:** Conduct an annual review of the organizational chart, and propose adjustments or continuation of the organizational chart to the board of education.

**A.1.10:** Review and update job descriptions to comply with audit criteria illustrated in **Exhibit 1.2.3** of this report, and submit to the board of education for adoption. Address the following issues:

- a. Ensure that chain of command elements are updated to match the revised organizational chart.
- b. In job descriptions for positions with responsibility for curriculum, assessment, instructional supervision, or professional development, strengthen job description language (where needed) to include responsibility for these curricular linkages (see **Exhibit 1.2.4**). Use precise language when describing the duties.



- c. Create/revise job descriptions where they are missing or for newly created positions or duties adjusted based upon this recommendation (e.g., Chief Academic Officer, Executive Director of Curriculum Design, Executive Director of Instruction, Assessment and Student Services, Coordinator of Professional Development, etc.).
- d. Include employee qualifications to reflect the needs of student populations (e.g., Spanish fluency, experience working with low income children, etc.).
- e. Include teacher and administrator responsibilities that reflect the district instructional model and curriculum emphasis (special skills or trainings required).
- f. Eliminate outdated job descriptions for positions that are no longer part of the district's organizational structure.
- g. Ensure that all job descriptions are dated and approved by the board of education.

## Summary

These policy recommendations, when implemented during the next 6 to 12 months, will establish clear parameters for management of the educational program, operations, and related functions, to support effective coordination of responsibilities, and to communicate expectations regarding the actions recommended in this report.

Likewise, successful organizations have an organizational chart and accompanying job descriptions that provide the structure and working parameters for a well-organized, focused, and efficient administrative team. Quality control and productivity depend on clear communication of the responsibilities and relationships of the organization. Effective relationships among leadership positions support the smooth operation of schools and keep focus on students and learning.

**Recommendation 2: Develop and implement a comprehensive curriculum management system that coordinates and prioritizes all curriculum management functions and tasks in the district. Develop clear expectations for rigor in instruction as well as in student materials and resources. Monitor student learning on a continuous basis to inform individualized, differentiated, and effective instruction.**

The written curriculum is the school system's way of guiding and directing classroom instruction. A quality curriculum is based on the principle that the written, taught, and tested curricula are aligned and ideally, deeply aligned. The first step in assuring alignment begins with a quality written curriculum guide that specifies what content is to be taught and suggests the best ways (contexts) to approach that content and to demonstrate mastery of it, as well as the desired cognitive type of student engagement. To be truly effective, curriculum elements must be aligned not only in content, but in context and cognitive type, as well. Context refers to the way in which something is learned or practiced. It describes the way teachers present material, as well as the ways students practice or demonstrate content. The cognitive type refers to the type of cognitive functioning students engage in when performing a task or practicing a skill. This alignment is provided in a document, in either print or electronic format, and clearly provides guidance on prerequisite skills, classroom strategies for teaching, and student activities. A quality guide also suggests a variety of rigorous, aligned resources and materials that support instructional goals. A quality guide also suggests a range of formative, diagnostic assessments, tools for pre-/post-testing, benchmark assessments, and sample test items, including rubrics where appropriate, so teachers are able to evaluate when students have mastered the intended objectives and can demonstrate that mastery. All this is specified in the curriculum offered to teachers, so they know these are tools and resources that align with the tests in use.

In order to ensure consistency in the design and in the development of high-quality curriculum guides, system leadership must describe the expectations in a well-laid-out plan. A clearly written plan is part of a strong curriculum management system. The plan directs the stages of development and review and assigns responsibility for design and delivery to system and school staff members. The plan provides processes for curriculum development, adoption, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and revision for all courses of study. A comprehensive curriculum management plan provides for system accountability and quality control. Once the plan is developed, it must be implemented and monitored.

After the district has incorporated key components of the aligned curriculum in the design (all written aspects of the curriculum, including the expectations for what its implementation should look like and aligned, formative assessment tools), managing the delivery of that curriculum involves staff development, ongoing support and coaching, and consistent monitoring. Instructional expectations should focus as much on cognitive engagement in the classroom as student engagement. Assessment data from valid and rigorous instruments must be collected to determine the effectiveness of instruction and programs or interventions, and adjustments made in response to those data. The aim is to continually improve instruction and curriculum management processes. Student success for all subgroups must also be monitored, to assure equity and equal access for all students.

Currently, there is no comprehensive curriculum management system in the Stamford Public Schools. Planning components are present in board policy but are not implemented or monitored (see **Finding 2.1**). Written curriculum meeting the CMIM minimum quality indicators in all content areas and grade levels is needed to provide both horizontal and vertical alignment (see **Findings 2.2** and **2.3**). Aligned resources and activities need to be provided to assist teachers in carrying out the intended objectives of the district (see **Finding 2.4**). In addition, clear instructional expectations need to be developed and communicated to ensure consistent delivery of the district's curriculum (see **Finding 3.2**).

The auditors recommend the following specific steps to address the gap in curriculum management components and processes across the district. These steps will help district leaders prioritize the work that needs to be done and focus all involved personnel on common goals, thereby rendering the attainment of those goals more likely. The recommended steps are organized into the following sections:

- I. Curriculum Planning and Personnel
- II. Curriculum Design and Development
- III. Curriculum Implementation and Monitoring

### ***I. Curriculum Planning and Personnel***

The system needs a cohesive and comprehensive plan that is fully implemented and directs the management of a quality, deeply aligned curriculum and its effective implementation in every classroom. Such management includes monitoring delivery to maintain equity and the system's philosophical and instructional priorities; and evaluating effectiveness, using the deeply aligned formative, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessment tools. The plan must integrate and coordinate professional development across the schools, specify and support identified methods (and purposes) for monitoring curriculum delivery, and reinforce the model for instructional delivery. These processes and procedures must be formalized and institutionalized to facilitate orientation of staff and ensure smooth transitions in the event of staff turnover.

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.2.1:** Review policies that define the roles and responsibilities of the board of education, district administrators, teachers, and support personnel regarding curriculum.

**G.2.2:** Request that the superintendent (or designee) updates and implements the plan for the development, revision, delivery, monitoring, and assessment of curriculum. The plan is intended to serve many purposes, but minimally: 1) to define the processes and timelines involved in the continuous evaluation and development of curriculum; and 2) to provide guidelines for what a finished product should look like. This plan should also incorporate the district's belief statements and mission. The plan should include all the components outlined in Administrative Function **A.2.2** and described in **Exhibit 2.1.2**, and should also include:

- a. The expectation of an aligned written, taught, and tested curriculum in all three dimensions (content, context, and cognitive type) for all content areas and at all grade levels.
- b. The expectation of a K-12 scope and sequence of specific learning goals, benchmarks, and objectives that form the backbone of the written curriculum and that meet and exceed the state's core standards. This scope and sequence should identify which objectives receive priority, eliminate overlaps among objectives, and connect the objectives in a clearly spiraled continuum of learning. This scope and sequence assists teachers in determining what concepts and skills are most important and supports curricular differentiation.
- c. A requirement that all courses offered be supported by quality written curriculum.
- d. Formal board of education adoption of all curricula prior to implementation.

Require that planning, particularly timelines for curriculum revisions, and planning for assessment be aligned to the curriculum management plan, especially in the area of providing the professional development necessary to support effective curriculum delivery (at any level—school, department, district). Note that the plan should also specify the role of curriculum resources and materials (textbooks) in supporting curriculum delivery, but not supplanting the curriculum.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.2.1:** Assist the board of education in refining policies that define the roles of the board, district administrators, and teachers regarding curriculum

**A.2.2:** Implement the curriculum management plan for directing the design, delivery, monitoring, evaluation, and revision of curriculum. The plan should include and specify the following characteristics (see **Finding 2.1**):

**A philosophical framework for the design of the curriculum:** What are the underlying beliefs of district leadership regarding how children learn, what constitutes effective teaching, what is the teacher's, role, what is the student's role, and what is a district's role in making available or ensuring a student's education? Is education a process, a goal, or both? Defining the beliefs and philosophy establishes the foundation for what curriculum should look like, what the district's and schools' respective roles are in providing each child with an education, and creates a picture of what an effective, engaging classroom might look like. Defining the philosophical framework must take place before defining an instructional model.

**Timing, scope, and procedures for a periodic cycle of curriculum and resource review/development:** This ensures that every content area is addressed and has a written curriculum guide that facilitates effective, rigorous instruction; and that curriculum is kept up-to-date, particularly with changes in state standards

or requirements as well as testing modifications or changes. The cycle should also include procedures for when/how often to finalize revisions or modifications to the curriculum, so revision is manageable and cost effective. Such a cycle should also establish the timeline for reviewing the alignment, quality, and rigor of adopted resources and materials, and direct their revision or replacement where and when they are inadequate. ALL resources that are referenced by the curriculum should be screened for rigor, appropriateness, alignment to district expectations for instruction and student engagement, and content alignment.

**Stages of curriculum development:** This specifies the different stages involved in developing and revising the curriculum. These might include: backloading and released item analysis (for deep alignment); review for deep alignment with external/target assessments in all three dimensions (content, context, cognition); assessing the complexity, rigor, and measurability of objectives; placing objectives in an articulated, PreK-12 sequence that expects mastery of content 6-9 months before it is encountered on the state assessment or other high stakes tests; developing mastery-level projects and activities with accompanying rubrics (to assure rigor); validating the existing objectives, materials, and resources against multiple external sources, such as AP standards, or others for rigor, cultural relevance, and student-centered, active and meaningful learning; and creating a bank of high quality assessment items and formative/progress-monitoring/diagnostic assessment instruments to support differentiated, individualized instruction. See *50 Ways to Close the Achievement Gap* for more specific suggestions and information. The stages defined in this plan must address particularly the way student achievement data, teacher input, and monitoring data are used to evaluate the quality of the written curriculum, and to revise the guides accordingly.

**Staff roles and responsibilities for curriculum management:** Who is responsible for what task? This aspect of the plan delineates which tasks are primarily classroom-based, which are school- or classroom-based, and which are district-based. For example, it is the board of education's responsibility to determine the content of the educational program, in congruence with state law, and to review the written curriculum. It is the teacher's role to deliver the curriculum, the principal's to monitor, and the administrators' responsibility to direct curriculum evaluation, development, and revision efforts.

Monitoring of classroom activities should be accomplished by the principal to identify and promote productive practices that support *learning*, correct or eliminate practices that do not, and identify professional development needs.

**A format and included components for curriculum guides:** Specify the aspects or components of the written curriculum guides that are non-negotiable, for consistency in every content area, and the other aspects that are "fluid." The curriculum should include, minimally, the components listed in **A.2.4**.

**Direction for how state standards will be included in the curriculum:** This includes whether or not to use a backloaded approach, in which the curriculum is derived from high-stakes tested learnings (topological and/or deep alignment), and/or a frontloaded approach, which derives the curriculum from the state standards (but in a refined, more specific format). This is defined in policy (see **Finding 1.1**).

**Require for every content area a focused set of precise student objectives/student expectations and standards:** These should be derived from the standards, be reasonable in number so the student has adequate time to master the content, be very specific so teachers clearly understand what mastery of these objectives look like and what the standard of performance is, and should be measurable (written in measurable terms, see **Finding 2.2**).

The curriculum should not only specify the content of the student objectives/student expectations, but also include multiple contexts and rigorous cognitive engagement (see **Finding 2.3**).

**Assessment beliefs and procedures to determine curriculum effectiveness and use of data:** What are all the instruments that will be used to measure progress toward meeting goals, including the goal of students mastering curriculum objectives? How and by whom the data will be used, and how data will be collected, analyzed, and disseminated to teachers, administrators, and concerned stakeholders should all be defined. There must be an expectation for formative assessments (diagnostic and authentic, could be suggested projects or assignments) in addition to the common assessments, included in the curriculum, that teachers can use whenever needed to evaluate student progress in mastering objectives (or to determine whether they already know content about to be taught). This also requires adjustment to the philosophy surrounding assessment, viewing it as assessment FOR learning, an integral component of the teaching/learning process.

**Design of curriculum to support differentiation and other expectations for delivery:** This directs the curriculum to be revised so that it supports teachers' differentiation of instructional approaches (to match student preferences and learning styles—called instructional differentiation), and to support teachers' selection of student objectives at the right level of difficulty (curricular differentiation). This ensures that those students who need prerequisite concepts, knowledge, and skills are moved ahead at an accelerated pace, so they don't fall further and further behind, and that students who have already mastered the objectives are also challenged. This also requires a framework for pacing that supports a degree of fluidity, based on the fact that all students learn at different and inconsistent (sometimes very fast, sometimes slower) rates.

District curriculum leaders must define what true academic differentiation looks like and how teachers can manage so many different skill levels and varying content knowledge in the classroom without holding certain students back or leaving other students behind. This is critical to meeting the needs of academically at-risk populations and must be addressed by the design of the curriculum in addition to all district documents that describe expectations for delivery. The better teachers are able to differentiate, the more students can be effectively served in the classroom without pull-out interventions that may disrupt student learning (see **Recommendation 5**).

**A staff development program linked to curriculum design and delivery:** Professional development prepares teachers to deliver the curriculum in accordance with the board's performance expectations. This includes support in the classroom and the proper use of PLCs to ensure that training and curriculum materials are properly used (see **Recommendation 4**).

**Monitoring the delivery of curriculum:** This presents the procedures, philosophy, and intent for monitoring the delivery of curriculum. Multiple means of monitoring are suggested. See the monitoring section under **III. Curriculum Implementation**.

**Communication plan:** A plan must be established for communicating among and across departments regarding the process of curriculum design and delivery (which also includes professional development and assessment) to maintain constancy of effort, focus, and continuity.

**A.2.3:** Make periodic reports to the board of education regarding the progress in managing curriculum district-wide, using data from formative and summative assessments, as well as from monitoring practices. The importance of quality, deeply-aligned written curriculum that raises expectations for student performance and supports those expectations with critical and aligned resources for teachers cannot be overstated—curriculum is a key component in ensuring better teaching and higher achievement. Planning for its development, implementation, and revision is essential to impacting student learning in every classroom.



## ***II. Curriculum Design and Development***

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.2.3:** Require efforts to improve the curriculum and ensure its delivery begin; require that decisions regarding which content areas receive priority be data-based.

**G.2.4:** Review and adopt the written curriculum prior to its implementation, based on a thorough consideration of documentation and staff advice.

**G.2.5:** Request the superintendent (or designee) to review the concepts of deep curriculum alignment, and require that those concepts form the basis for curriculum design and revision efforts across the district (see also **A.2.8**).

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.2.4:** Define what the curriculum will need to be considered a “model” curriculum guide. These components are minimum requirements. Consider the following:

**Objectives (Tightly-Held):** Objectives should be “refinements” of the state standards: a specific restatement of the intended skill or knowledge to be learned, the contexts in which it is to be learned and practiced, and the standard of performance by which a teacher knows mastery of that skill or knowledge has been achieved. Specific learner objectives give the teacher more precise information of what mastery looks like and clearly define which objectives are assigned to which grade or instructional level (because the first grade objective is clearly different from the second, and so on). The number of objectives included in the guide must also be manageable. It is better to focus on fewer objectives and address them more “deeply” than including an entire battery of objectives that teachers “might” touch on. Review all objectives for evidence of rigor.

**Assessment (Tightly-Held):** Valid and rigorous tools for assessing each objective must be included in the curriculum. District assessments should be cross-referenced throughout, specifying when, how, and with which instrument each objective (or a cluster of objectives within a unit) will be evaluated (see **Recommendation 3**).

Additional diagnostic assessments and authentic instruments are needed, so teachers have tools with which to continuously evaluate student progress and move them at the appropriate, individualized pace. Common assessments at the elementary level should be used to monitor students’ reading levels and acquisition of literacy skills as often as needed, until students demonstrate strong reading comprehension and literacy skills.

Teachers require a battery of assessment instruments that can serve as an integral part of instruction and that they can select at will for use with students whenever needed.

**Prerequisites/Scope and Sequence (Tightly-Held):** Place the essential standards and learning targets (Pre-K-12) within a scope and sequence document to allow teachers to easily discern what content and skills students come in with, and what content and skills they are responsible for seeing students leave with. Such a document helps distribute accountability and eliminates gaps and overlaps in student learning—an important factor in an educational environment that must make the most of the time allowed with students. This will also facilitate greater articulation of the curriculum from one level to the next and assure greater coordination across a single level or course, as the mapping out of objectives is



already completed, and any “misinterpretation” of the nonspecific state standards/student expectations is avoided. Giving teachers a clear continuum of student learning from PreK-12 also allows them to move students ahead at a more appropriate pace, if the student is ready, since they know exactly what is next, just as they know what students have mastered when they come into their classroom.

**Suggested Strategies and Approaches (Loosely-Held):** This item is a critical part of ensuring high expectations for students and achieving deep alignment. This component is intended to provide teachers, particularly inexperienced teachers, with support in deciding ways to teach the assigned objectives. Flexibility is *always* allowed in how teachers approach a given objective, but this component provides teachers with invaluable, research-proven suggestions if they want or need them. The suggested strategies should be revised to ensure they incorporate those **contexts** and **cognitive types** known to be part of the tests in use, and these strategies and suggested student activities and projects allow students to become familiar with the context and cognitive type before encountering them on the high stakes tests. This is the main tenet of the “doctrine of no surprises.”

Such strategies, however, should not ONLY align with test contexts. A wide variety of authentic, student-centered, and culturally responsive contexts is recommended to ensure a more broad-based, real-life application of the concepts, skills, and knowledge so that students can connect personally with the learning, be more actively and cognitively engaged, and see the overall value of their learning.

**Suggested Resources and Materials (Loosely-Held):** Every book, recommended professional resource, audiovisual aid, technological enhancement or program, and other resource should be listed or linked (after ensuring teachers have all that are necessary) in the guide and be referenced by objective/strategy within a lesson or unit, AFTER it has been screened for rigor, quality, developmental appropriateness, and alignment with the content, contexts, and cognitive types of the objectives. Suggested materials and resources have been analyzed for deep alignment to the curriculum and the tests in use; modifications are also included in the guide to improve alignment. Build upon the instructional resource adoption rubrics, for the four content areas, that are currently in use in SPS.

**Suggested Student Activities and Assignments (Loosely-Held):** These can be added over time, but the purpose of including suggested student activities is to provide teachers with an idea of what high quality, rigorous engagement looks like. These can also serve as authentic assessments when provided with a specific rubric.

**A.2.5:** Determine the format for the curriculum. How will all of the identified components, at minimum the six described above, be included. Design with the end user in mind. Use the same format for all content areas. A consistent format will assist teachers, especially at the elementary level, in their retrieval of information.

**A.2.6:** Review staff roles and responsibilities for curriculum management, and determine how curriculum writing will be accomplished. Provide all curriculum writers with extensive professional development prior to writing.

**A.2.7:** Reflect in the design of the curriculum the expectation that instruction will be differentiated to accommodate individual student needs (academic—curricular differentiation) and learning styles (instructional differentiation). This requires supporting fluid groupings of students (pairs, small groups, etc.), MTSS, in addition to the basic suggestions for reteaching as well as enrichment within the guides themselves. See also **A.2.13** in **III. Curriculum Implementation**.

**A.2.8:** Engage in a deep alignment analysis to ensure the objectives, resources, and strategies included in curriculum guides are deeply aligned to the tests in use. Research the methods and ideas presented

in the book, “Deep Curriculum Alignment,” by English and Steffy (2001), or consider contracting for a deep curriculum alignment training to gain the skills necessary to analyze and deconstruct released test items, for information on how to successfully prepare for current and future tests in use, and to more successfully anticipate the direction in which the test is moving. This will assist the district in predicting where the state assessments and other external assessments are going and increase student success on current and future forms of the tests in use, by ensuring that the content, context, and cognitive types encountered on any tests are an integral part of daily instruction without compromising rigor, active student engagement, and hands-on problem solving.

**A.2.9:** Develop a process to ensure that all texts, instructional materials, and ancillary resources for all courses that are offered, including interventions and adopted commercially-produced programs, are screened for quality, rigor, and alignment to the curriculum and district expectations for delivery in all three dimensions (content, context, cognition), and presented to the board for adoption.

**A.2.10:** Prepare trainings for teachers in using and effectively implementing the curriculum, using the instructional model as the context for delivering the guides.

### ***III. Curriculum Implementation and Monitoring***

#### **Instruction**

The element of instructional delivery is a critical part of promoting high expectations for students, achieving deep alignment between the written and taught curriculum, and providing teachers, particularly inexperienced teachers, with support in selecting ways to teach the assigned objective(s). Flexibility should be allowed in how teachers approach a particular objective, but a well-developed district-adopted instructional model provides teachers with invaluable, research-proven suggestions. Instructional strategies should incorporate content and process standards for each objective as well as those contexts and cognitive types known to be part of the assessment structure in use. Recommended instructional strategies should incorporate a mastery learning approach, which provides for differentiation based on informal and diagnostic assessment, along with reteaching and sufficient practice to embed new learning into long-term memory. Differentiation includes strategies for remediation, sheltering content for access by English language learners, enrichment, and strategies that are effective with at-risk student populations. A district-adopted instructional model should be explicitly incorporated within curriculum design rather than be a stand-alone add-on.

The auditors found no direction in policy, job descriptions, or observation and evaluation protocols for district expectations of an instructional model. There was no common understanding of expectations for instructional practice across the district. In their visits to classrooms throughout the district, auditors found instructional practices were varied. The rigor, however, was not reflective of the most rigorous types of cognition.

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.2.6:** Request the superintendent (or designee) to review research-supported instructional strategies that are effective with all student populations (such information is available from CMSi). Require this review of research to focus especially on those characteristics that have been shown to improve student achievement, such as vocabulary development and cognitively engaging instruction.

**G.2.7:** Request the superintendent (or designee) to develop administrative regulations (files) that define the instructional model(s) to be adopted in classrooms throughout the district.

**G.2.8:** Request that the superintendent (or designee) regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery of curriculum across the district. Such an evaluation should use data from multiple sources: formative assessments, summative assessments, all monitoring data from the principal, and from the teacher evaluation instrument.

**G.2.9:** Adopt the policies and regulations described above when drafted; request the superintendent to ensure their implementation.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.2.11:** Assist the board of education in developing the policies described above.

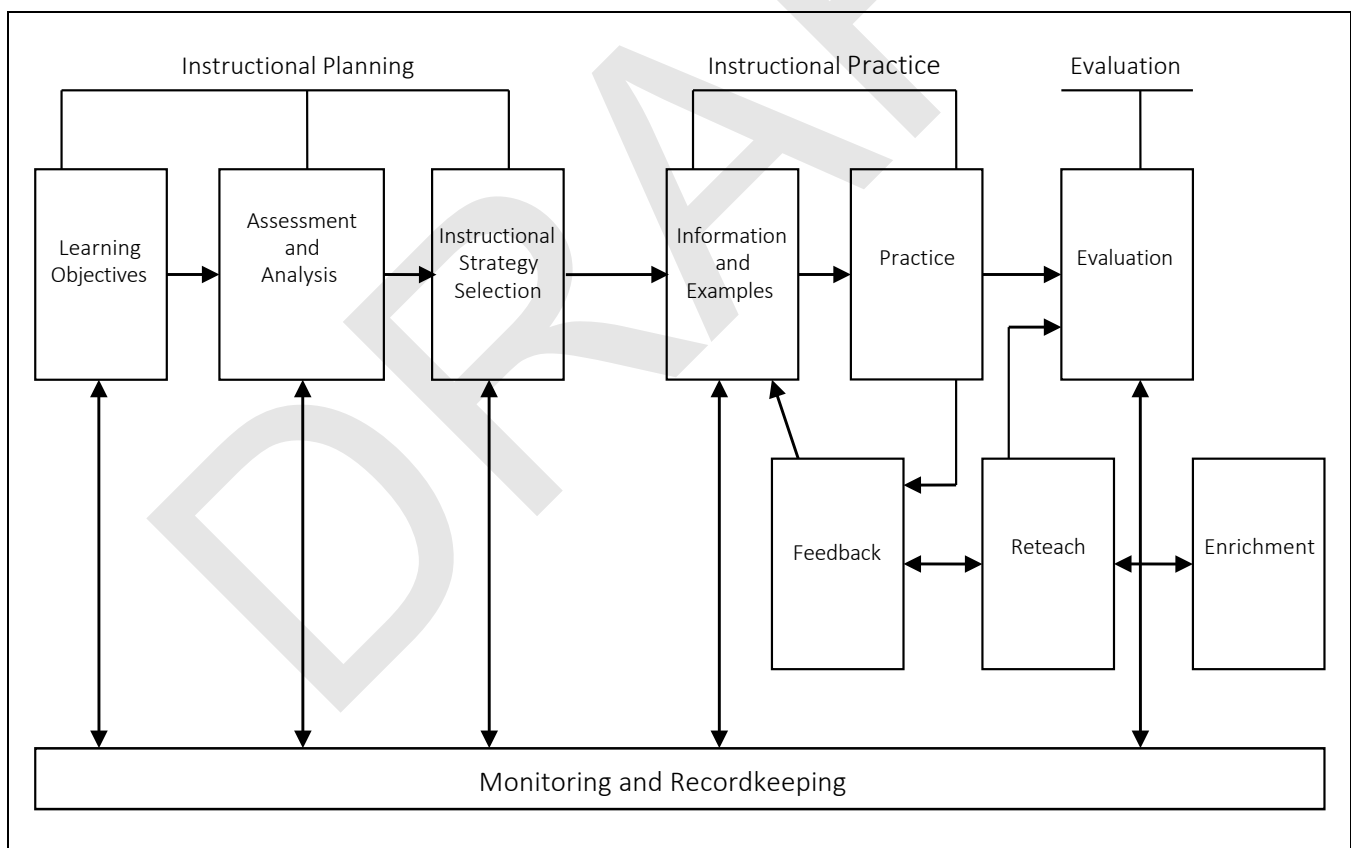
**A.2.12:** Assure consistency in curriculum implementation. Train teachers in the new curriculum documents, and support them in using them to guide instruction. Assure that the curriculum is used in a context that prioritizes student needs above all else—the most effective instruction is responsive to students at an individual level.

**A.2.13:** Define the instructional model expected to be used in classrooms across the district. This is *not* intended to be a prescriptive, tightly-held requirement. Rather, the instructional model is intended to provide a clear picture of what district leaders want and expect effective and rigorous instruction to look like. The model should encompass the following:

- a. **Strategies/Approaches:** Describe the ways in which district-adopted curriculum is expected to be delivered. In other words, the types of teaching practices district leadership expects to see and that are proven effective should be specifically described in writing and adopted in policy to ensure implementation. Strategies are loosely held, but this is intended to outline those strategies and approaches the district considers congruent with the philosophy of teaching and learning. Suggested practices should be research-based, developmentally appropriate as well as relevant, and might include:
  1. Ensuring that the learning objective and language objective are evident to students and that the students understand what they should know and be able to do;
  2. Implementing higher-order questioning that helps students see the “big picture” of the concepts, knowledge, and skills being taught, as well as facilitating a deeper understanding on the part of students.
  3. Differentiating instruction to meet the individual needs of all students.
  4. Using small group activities, paired tasks, and cooperative learning strategies.
  5. Using sheltered strategies, such as SIOP, to provide English language learners and students with low vocabulary ranges access to core curriculum and to support their academic English language development across all content areas.
  6. Comparing/contrasting new concepts, knowledge, skills, with concepts, skills, and experiences already familiar to students.
  7. Engaging students in experimental inquiry, problem-solving, and investigation—all hands-on methods of applying or discovering new knowledge and concepts.
  8. Having students set their own learning goals, develop strategies for attaining them, and monitor their own progress toward meeting those goals.

9. Engaging students in metacognitive activities, whereby they analyze their own thought processes in approaching test questions, assignments, new information, etc.
  10. Using non-linguistic ways to support comprehension of, identification with, and the retention of new concepts or knowledge, such as pictures, graphic organizers, outlines, etc.
  11. Tailoring instruction to the cultural, economic, and linguistic diversity present in every classroom, recognizing and valuing differences and similarities, and emphasizing the benefits of cultural and linguistic pluralism.
- b. **Instructional Planning and Monitoring of Learning:** Describe expectations for how teachers are to use student performance/achievement data to plan instruction based on their specific academic needs. Consider the Mastery Learning Model as a possibility for planning and executing instruction using a variety of strategies and approaches that the teacher is comfortable with. The Mastery Learning Model requires close monitoring of student learning that is data-based, and relies on flexible, small student grouping to deliver the exact teaching that those students need, rather than relying on whole group, one-size-fits-all approaches. This model is presented in the following exhibit.

**Exhibit R.2.1: Mastery Learning Model**



Require the monitoring of curriculum delivery to include monitoring for these teaching strategies and practices expected to be used in the classroom. The aim is to provide teachers with specific feedback regarding what type of strategies they were using, their effectiveness, and how that strategy could have been more effective or how perhaps another could have been used to improve student achievement.

**A.2.14:** As part of the instructional model, incorporate the expectation for **differentiating** instruction in the classroom to meet individual student needs. Differentiation occurs in two important ways: differentiating the content or objective an individual student needs to learn based on where they are at in the overall sequence of learning; and differentiating the type of activity or performance product the student is expected to accomplish or create. Both types of differentiation are important, but teachers must learn the difference and apply one or the other or both as needed with each individual child, based on the individual child's need. A critical part of differentiating effectively is having a battery of skill-specific diagnostic assessments that give teachers key information on whether a student has mastered a targeted concept or skill.

**A.2.15:** Communicate the expectations for adherence to the instructional model widely. Integrate throughout all discussions and meetings concerning curriculum delivery the need to not only verbally espouse high expectations for all students and respect and appreciation for cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and economic diversity, but to model it faithfully in every classroom every day.

The definition and adoption of a research-based, student-centered, rigorous instructional model will assist the district in moving forward with improving instruction and student achievement.

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring is the primary means by which district leaders evaluate the degree to which curriculum is delivered with fidelity, and that the instructional model is likewise reflected in classroom activities and instruction. Monitoring is a critical facet of effective implementation. It is about supporting and facilitating quality and effective curriculum delivery, not just looking for it. No matter who is involved in monitoring (it can be carried out by multiple positions within a building and even by teachers amongst themselves), the principal should remain the instructional leader on the campus.

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.2.10:** Revise the principal and superintendent's job descriptions and board policy to include more specific expectations for monitoring. These expectations must:

- a. Define all purposes of monitoring.
- b. Specify who is monitoring for what and how those responsibilities are interconnected. For example, if department chairs share in monitoring responsibilities, how/when are their findings or observation data shared with the principal? What kind of feedback should they share with district-level curriculum staff? How is this to occur and how frequently? Ensure that the building principal remains the key instructional leader in the building, and require him/her to oversee all monitoring that occurs by other staff members.
- c. Specify what type of data are to be collected for each purpose, and with what methods.
- d. Indicate which data are intended to be collected district-wide for district-level feedback (such as for determining the effectiveness of a professional development initiative), and which data are to be used for teacher evaluation, coaching, and instructional improvement within the building. All monitoring data should be reported to a single department, rather than split across individual departments. Instructional walk-through data is about collecting information regarding the effectiveness and alignment of the delivered curriculum, not an evaluation of teachers, so this should be seen primarily as a curriculum-related function.



- e. Consider two other purposes and types of monitoring that supplement the non-supervisory classroom walk-throughs: SchoolView trend data collection and Examining Student Work data collection for calibrating student work. SchoolView is simply classroom observational data collected frequently over time to see if dominant teacher and student activities, the objectives taught, and the student work displayed all reflect the district's instructional model and expectations for rigor. Examining Student work is a method for collecting student work to calibrate it against district and state standards and expectations to check alignment and determine whether the work is on, above, or below level. All three methods for collecting data are for different purposes and all three comprise one facet of monitoring that contributes to valuable feedback for decision making.

**G.2.11:** Request that the superintendent (or designee) revise supervision and evaluation procedures to be consistent with the district's instructional model.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.2.16:** Require monitoring to be the primary responsibility of the principal, in keeping with his/her role as an instructional leader. In monitoring, district leaders should not only keep the learner objectives and effective strategies in mind, but the instructional model, as well, focusing reflective questions on those aspects of the model the administrators deem appropriate or desirable.

**A.2.17:** Create walk-through observation tools and evaluation procedures that are consistent with the newly adopted instructional model.

**A.2.18:** Once the new instructional model has been incorporated into regular classroom practice, consider adding additional classroom observation processes (in addition to walk-throughs), as described above, to specifically evaluate the student artifacts and learning objectives being used in each classroom, in a collaborative, non-threatening context that can even be performed by teachers. Consider something like Examining Student Work program (CMSi) to enable teachers and building leaders to gauge the level of student work in the school and determine if it is appropriately on-level and cognitively challenging. This process will also assist teachers in evaluating the work they assign in their classrooms (a loosely-held component), particularly those activities and resources that are commercially-produced.

It is recommended that work on this recommendation commence concurrently with work on **Recommendation 1**. By implementing this recommendation, SPS will address the inadequacies in curriculum management components and processes across the district. The work of this recommendation is ongoing, as a periodic review of the curriculum of the district is an essential function of curriculum management.

**Recommendation 3: Develop and implement a comprehensive student assessment plan. Utilize feedback provided by assessments to make informed decisions at all levels of the organization that positively impact student learning. Develop a comprehensive program evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of the design and delivery of district programs. Require student assessment data be utilized as feedback for budgeting related to the initiation, modification, continuation, or termination of programs and/or interventions.**

A comprehensive plan for student assessment provides school systems with the procedures necessary to give feedback about the effectiveness of a district's instructional program. A comprehensive assessment system includes assessment of all students at all grade levels in all content areas and includes both formative and summative measures. The plan provides for appropriate trainings in effective instructional

use of assessment results and includes specific procedures for how the data will be used to make decisions about curriculum and instruction.

Stamford Public Schools (SPS) currently does not have a comprehensive written student assessment and program evaluation plan (see **Finding 4.1**) that requires formative and summative assessments for monitoring student achievement in every course at every grade level and for evaluating all district programs and interventions. The absence of a written plan inhibits district leadership from having access to complete data about the quality of the entire curriculum, the effectiveness of instructional programs, or the impact of interventions in increasing student achievement in a cost-effective manner. The feedback loop from the written to the taught curriculum is incomplete without the development and implementation of formative and summative assessments in each content area and every grade (see **Finding 4.2**). The lack of a feedback loop from student achievement to specific programs and interventions prevents board members and district leaders from ensuring that human and fiscal resources are being expended productively over time.

Board policies and system plans were found collectively to be inadequate for leading discussions at both the district and school levels about the effective use of assessments and assessment data to address students' instructional needs (see **Findings 1.3** and **4.1**). The auditors did not find a plan or a set of procedures in place to direct all aspects of assessment, nor did the auditors find a systemic plan for training staff focused on the instructional use of assessment results (see **Finding 4.1**). The scope of student assessment was found to be inadequate in core and non-core curriculum to provide sufficient data to make informed decisions about curriculum (see **Finding 4.2**). There is no systematic approach to the effective use of data for sound decision making regarding teaching and learning in the district (see **Finding 4.3**). Assessment trends show stable academic performance for SPS; however, persistent achievement gaps exist for some student groups (see **Finding 4.4**).

The following actions are recommended to the school board and superintendent for consideration in improving assessment and the use of assessment data in SPS.

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.3.1:** Request the superintendent to present to the board for review and adoption a board policy that provides the framework for a comprehensive student assessment and program evaluation plan, including:

- a. A description of the philosophical framework for the design of a student assessment plan and direction for both formative and summative assessment of the curriculum by course and grade in congruence with board policy.
- b. Direction for the use of data to analyze group, school, program, and system student trends.
- c. A requirement that formative data are available to inform instructional decisions and summative data to evaluate both the effectiveness of the curriculum and individual student mastery of the curriculum.
- d. A requirement that teachers, campus staff, and district staff responsible for developing formative assessments receive professional development that will enable them to create valid and reliable assessments.

**G.3.2:** Request the superintendent to present to the board for review and adoption a comprehensive student assessment and program evaluation plan as described in policy under **G.3.1**.

**G.3.3:** Commit adequate resources to support the development and maintenance of a district-wide, comprehensive student assessment and program evaluation plan, including sufficient resources to assure the capacity to execute **G.3.1**.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.3.1:** Assist the board in developing a policy that provides direction for the development and implementation of comprehensive student assessment and program evaluation plan containing the elements listed in **G.3.1**.

**A.3.2:** Develop a comprehensive student assessment and program evaluation plan containing the elements listed in **G.3.1** plus the following administrative regulations and procedures to support the implementation of the student assessment plan described in **G.3.1** and include the following characteristics (see **Finding 4.1**):

- a. **A philosophical framework for the student assessment and program evaluation plan:** What are all the instruments that will be used to measure progress toward meeting goals, including the goal of students mastering curriculum objectives? How and by whom the data will be used and how data will be collected, analyzed, and disseminated to teachers, administrators, and concerned stakeholders should all be defined. There must be an expectation for formative assessments (diagnostic and authentic, could be suggested projects or assignments) that are in addition to the common assessments, included in the curriculum, that teachers can use whenever needed to evaluate student progress in mastering objectives (or to determine whether they already know content about to be taught). This also requires adjustment to the philosophy surrounding assessment, viewing it as assessment FOR learning, an integral component of the teaching/learning process.
- b. **Timing, scope, and procedures for a periodic cycle of assessment review/development:** Establishes a review cycle for locally developed assessments that includes analysis of validity and reliability, content and rigor, alignment between the district and state assessments, and feedback from teachers, campus administrators, and curriculum staff.
- c. **Staff roles and responsibilities for assessment and program evaluation:** Who is responsible for what task? This aspect of the plan delineates which tasks are primarily classroom-based, which are school- or classroom-based, and which are district-based. For example, it is the board of education's responsibility to determine the assessment and program evaluation expectation. It is the teacher's role to deliver the assessment, the principal's role to monitor, and the administrators' responsibility to direct assessment and program evaluation, development, and revision efforts.
- d. **Professional Development:** Directs appropriate and ongoing professional development to support all elements of the student assessment plan.
- e. Specifies how and what assessment information will be included in curriculum guides for each course.
- f. Establishes expectations and procedures for administrators and teachers to review student outcome data to improve the curriculum and the design of courses of instruction at all grade levels and in all subject areas.
- g. Specifies procedures to achieve a scope of assessment that meets the requirements of the policy described in **G.3.1**.

- h. Requires data analysis to identify any bias or inequity in the implementation of the assessment plan. Based on the analysis, develop an action plan to eliminate the inequities, create a report of the findings, and specify the frequency and to whom these findings will be distributed.
- i. Specifies how assessment results will be disseminated so that appropriate data are provided in a user-friendly format to those who make decisions at every level of the system.
- j. Specifies the steps and timelines of the budget process to assure that all elements of the student assessment plan have adequate resources.
- k. Specifies the frequency, content, and dissemination of progress reports about the implementation and effectiveness of the student assessment plan.
- l. Specifies the procedures, timelines, and the persons responsible for reviewing, monitoring, and amending the student assessment plan.

**A.3.3:** Establish timelines for principals and curriculum personnel to work with staff members to develop formative and summative assessments for each grade level, course, and content area without formal district-wide assessment. Require that the assessments be developed and organized in a fashion whereby information on student(s)' learning of the curriculum (i.e., by student expectation) can be easily collected and analyzed.

**A.3.4:** Direct district instructional support leaders to provide targeted training for campus administrators and teachers on how to use assessment data to measure student progress and then make instructional decisions that enable them to differentiate instruction in response to student learning needs while still moving forward in expected curriculum implementation.

**A.3.5:** Establish clear expectations for administrators and teachers in board policies, job descriptions, and personnel appraisal systems on use of assessment data for diagnosing student needs, evaluating student progress, and determining curriculum effectiveness.

**A.3.6:** Consider assigning the overarching responsibility for student assessment, data use, and research to a top-level administrator with a degree in educational measurement and statistics or a related field.

**A.3.7:** Develop an ongoing process for the consistent monitoring of student achievement and growth, and include test data analysis and data-based recommendations in all school department and district level reports and budget requests.

Work on this recommendation should commence six months to a year after work on **Recommendation 1** begins, and once started the components of this recommendation should be completed within approximately six months. Implementing these recommendations will allow the staff of SPS to effectively utilize assessment data to make sound instructional decisions about curriculum and instruction to support student growth and achievement.

**Recommendation 4: Develop and implement comprehensive planning that addresses identified weaknesses in existing district and school improvement plans, professional development plan, and technology plan. These plans must provide for a coordinated, systematic district-wide approach in planning, design, delivery, and evaluation to promote effective instructional delivery of the district curriculum.**

Effective planning is essential for focusing and organizing district resources to meet changing student needs. Long-range planning provides a systematic means to sustain consistency of purpose as a district works toward achieving its goals. Comprehensive planning increases the probability that effective

programs and practices will be available to students regardless of economic status and other effects of community evolution.

### **District and School Improvement Planning**

The auditors found that while planning takes place in the district, current efforts are not fully achieving the intended effects, focusing attention, energy, and resources toward realizing the district mission and vision. The present district strategic plan will expire at the end of 2021-22 school year. District and school improvement plans contain two of the strategic plan goals. A plan does not exist in the area of professional development (see **Finding 3.2**), and the technology plan is outdated (see **Finding 1.4**).

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.4.1:** Adopt a board policy requiring:

- a. A five-year district-wide strategic plan that includes measurable outcome targets.
- b. The development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and connectivity of district, school improvement, and department plans.
- c. An annual district improvement plan with measurable targets that, if achieved, will lead incrementally to the achievement of the strategic plan outcome targets within five years.
- d. An annual improvement plan with measurable targets for each school that principally and explicitly addresses the priorities in the annual district improvement plan with annual school targets.
- e. An annual review of plans by the superintendent and report to the board at regular intervals.

**G.4.2:** Adopt policy that clearly delineates the decisions that will be made at the district level and those that will be made at the school level.

**G.4.3:** Request the superintendent present a plan to implement the administrative functions outlined below, including a timeline and needed resources. Commit adequate resources and political support for timely implementation. Require regular board updates on progress.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.4.1:** Assist the board in developing the policy described in **G.4.1**.

**A.4.2:** Develop a multi-year model for the design of school improvement plans, and require the plans to identify persons responsible for implementing the action; include timelines, resources, and funding for each strategy.

**A.4.3:** Work with district staff to create a guidance document with quality criteria for annual improvement plans that include at a minimum the following characteristics noted in **Finding 1.3** and below:

- a. Numeric baseline data for each goal, or, if numeric baseline data are not available or not applicable, a statement of explanation
- b. Goals that are reasonable, clear, and measurable, including cost and budget provisions
- c. Actions for each goal that lead to the achievement of the goal, including key indicators for quality execution of the action
- d. Evaluation based on measurable data



- e. Identification of persons responsible for implementing strategies
- f. A timeline for submitting the plan to the designated district administrator
- g. School or department improvement plans prescribing changes within the school or department that support the objectives of the annual district improvement plan
- h. Results of monitoring recorded at least quarterly with recommendations for adjustments to the plan as needed.

**A.4.4:** Develop procedures to include ongoing monitoring and evaluation of supporting plans such as instructional technology and professional development to ensure that these plans align with the priorities of the district plan and progress is being made toward those priorities.

**A.4.5:** Work with district staff to create a system of training, support, and accountability to equip staff to write and execute plans, according to the criteria described in **Exhibit 1.3.2**.

**A.4.6:** Prepare and present regular reports to the board, staff, and community regarding the implementation and evaluation of district and school planning.

Implementing the recommendations outlined above will assist the SPS board of education and superintendent in establishing more significant control of the district mission and vision by implementing more effective district and school planning processes and providing parameters in board policy to be successful in improving and institutionalizing a comprehensive planning process for district-wide student achievement.

### **Instructional Technology**

Technology planning in an effective school district leads to technology implementation that supports deeper more meaningful learning and thereby increases overall student achievement.

The systemic efficient integration of technology into curriculum and instruction additionally serves as a model for students to view technology as a crucial component in future careers. Appropriately funding and directing the equitable use of technology throughout the school district is an essential part of successful management and control. A written plan that outlines expectations, goals, guidelines, and evaluation protocols for the use and integration of technology is a productive means of ensuring consistent implementation across the district.

Auditors found that SPS does have a comprehensive technology plan that is presently being updated. Board policies for instructional technology exist; however, they are limited in relation to guidance and responsibilities connected to technology for the outcome of improvement in student learning (see **Finding 1.4**).

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.4.4:** Review and adopt a policy that outlines the criteria for use and implementation of technology at the district and building level.

**G.4.5:** Require through the policy described in **G.4.4** that a schedule be established for reporting evidence of the effectiveness of technology use to the board and other decision-makers. Require effectiveness be calculated in terms of impact on student achievement.

**G.4.6:** Establish an annual reporting cycle for administrators to present student performance data linked to the goals and objectives of the technology plan as well as recommendations to continue, modify, or terminate practices.

**G.4.7:** Approve funding for instructional technology, related professional development, maintenance, and sustainability based on completed needs assessments, information regarding alignment with the curriculum, student performance data, and criteria (see **A.4.8**).

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.4.7:** Draft the policy recommended in **G.4.4** and present to the board of education for adoption.

**A.4.8:** Establish criteria and create a plan for developing, adopting, implementing, and monitoring technology use that is aligned to district priorities, the written curriculum, and student learning goals. Require collaboration, input, and feedback in developing the plan from key stakeholders (e.g., representative leadership from, at minimum, curriculum, technology, professional development, assessment, and school buildings). The technology program criteria found in **Exhibit 1.4.1** should be included.

**A.4.9:** Require that district curriculum documents include recommendations for the effective use of instructional technology to assist students with learning.

**A.4.10:** Align classroom technology use for instruction in learning with instructional expectations. Consider incorporating active classic technology use as part of the teacher evaluation protocol.

**A.4.11:** Provide professional development for teachers and staff on fully integrating technology as part of the instructional delivery process (see **Exhibit 1.4.3**).

**A.4.12:** Provide professional development for program administrators and principals on identifying effective technology use in the classroom.

The implementation of the given recommendations will advance the overall management of technology and productivity of district personnel within the district. Furthermore, the plan will enhance instructional models to fully integrate the technology into student learning, and, therefore, increase achievement levels.

### **Professional Development**

The purpose of a quality professional development program is to increase staff effectiveness and student achievement. A high-quality professional development program results from a comprehensive professional development plan that addresses district goals. A coordinated, systematic district-wide approach is necessary to ensure that improvements in teaching and learning are evident. It should be based on district identified needs, be designed for long-term implementation, and provide opportunities for meaningful practice and follow-up. The plan should provide for research-based, job embedded professional development with a focus on the three phases of change – initiation, implementation, and institutionalization, which are necessary for sustainable and long-term improvements in the delivery of instruction. A comprehensive professional development program also requires regular evaluation of the professional development approaches and content to determine if student achievement has improved based on the training and approaches used.

Auditors found that SPS does not have a written professional development plan. Auditors did find professional development activities at the district and building levels, but concluded that district

professional development policies are weak, and plans and procedures do not exist to provide for a professional development program to provide staff with the necessary knowledge and skills in a systematic and coordinated manner to improve student achievement (see **Finding 3.2**).

Planning, designing, delivering, and evaluating a coordinated and systematic district-wide professional development program will provide support for staff to enable them to strengthen instructional practices needed to improve student achievement. Auditors offer the following recommendations to the Stamford Public Schools Board of Education and Superintendent.

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.4.8:** Adopt policy to define the purpose of professional development as well as job roles and responsibilities to centralize and coordinate district and campus professional development efforts. The policy should include areas as described in **Exhibit 3.2.1**.

**G.4.9:** Develop and approve a multi-year comprehensive professional development plan. The plan must include at least three years with annual updates and revisions to ensure connectivity to system priorities. The plan should include at minimum the following:

- a. District mission, vision, and strategic priorities;
- b. Congruency with staff member appraisal data;
- c. Student assessment data;
- d. Program evaluation data;
- e. Student equity needs; and
- f. Staff member needs assessment, including both professional and support staff.

The plan should also include an evaluation process that includes feedback from participants, that monitors changes in instruction based on acquired skills from professional development, and that analyzes the impact on student achievement data. The form of evaluation requires more than just participation feedback or a satisfaction survey. Effectiveness must be measured in terms of demonstrated teacher competence in incorporating professional development information in the classroom with coordinated practice, coaching, and feedback. This evaluation component will help determine whether the professional development program is achieving desired results.

**G.4.10:** Request the superintendent to work with staff to define professional development roles and responsibilities. This includes clarifying individual and building responsibilities and accountability procedures, and coordinating and focusing professional development efforts on district priorities to prevent duplication and inconsistency.

**G.4.11:** Require that professional development activities use a variety of proven research-based methods aligned to theories of adult learning and engagement. Trainers should use strategies that model instructional practices that staff members are expected to utilize in the classroom.

**G.4.12:** Request the superintendent to present an annual report of results on the comprehensive professional development plan. This will ensure the program is following board policy and is aligned with system-wide goals and priorities. The report should include:

- a. An overview of the process used to determine the needs for professional development. This should include an analysis of the intended impact on student learning for consideration before adoption of the budget so that appropriate prioritization can occur in budget decisions.
- b. A review of identified professional development needs that prioritize student needs.
- c. A review of the planning process used to identify and coordinate the best approaches to address student needs, including the process to identify what knowledge and skills are needed for teachers and/or administrators to meet those needs.
- d. A review of the major learning outcomes or the outcomes the district determines necessary to accomplish.
- e. A review of the major learning activities offered (the number of focus initiatives should be limited at a given time).
- f. An update on the percentage of teachers who participated in high quality professional development activities by grade and/or content area.
- g. A review of the evaluation process used to measure the effectiveness of professional development activities in relation to planned teacher and student outcomes.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.4.13:** Assist the board in developing the recommended policy in **G.4.8** aligned to the 18 criteria described in **Exhibit 3.2.1** that establish standards for professional development. Ensure that professional development is planned and mandatory for all professional staff, including building administrators responsible for monitoring the delivery of the curriculum (see **Finding 3.2**).

**A.4.14:** Develop administrative regulations and procedures to implement all adopted professional development policies and activities district-wide.

**A.4.15:** Designate an administrator responsible for the coordination of professional development activities, and assign this person the responsibility to develop a comprehensive multi-year professional development plan for review and approval. The plan should include the elements outlined in **G.4.12**.

**A.4.16:** Empower the administrator identified as responsible for professional development coordination with the authority and responsibility to approve and monitor all district-supported professional development activities in consultation with the superintendent and building administrators.

**A.4.17:** Assign the appropriate administrator identified as responsible for professional development the responsibility to develop and present to the board an annual report on the status and outcomes of trainings based on student performance data resulting from professional development plan and offerings. This report should include the following:

- a. A review of identified professional development and student needs;
- b. An overview of all major learning initiatives outlining what professional development activities were accomplished, and how those initiatives are being prioritized for initiation, implementation, and institutionalization;
- c. The alignment of learning initiatives in relationship to performance goals; and

- d. The evaluation procedures used to measure the effectiveness of professional development in relation to improved instructional practices and student achievement.

**A.4.18:** Align the school professional development plans with the school improvement plans/multi-year strategic plan (see **Findings 1.3** and **3.2**).

**A.4.19:** Identify the source(s) of funding for professional development activities, ensuring that legal requirements are met and that necessary resources are available to effectively implement the professional development plan.

Implementing these recommendations will support consistency, coordination, and connectivity district-wide. These recommendations, when fully implemented, should allow the district to experience improvements in instruction and increases in student achievement. A well-designed professional development program will incorporate policies, planning, and focus on design, delivery, and evaluation aimed at the improvement of teaching and learning. Overall, the focus of professional development should be on the improved delivery of curriculum and its monitoring to assure student learning is maximized. By implementing this recommendation, SPS will address the needs in the professional development area and processes across the district. The work of this recommendation is ongoing, as evaluation of professional development by the district is an essential function to measure improvement in teaching and learning.

**Recommendation 5: Prioritize equity in every policy, plan, and aspect of teaching and learning. Establish procedures for monitoring equity issues across the district. Develop and implement a plan of action to establish clear guidance, direction, and coordination in instructional delivery and planning for underserved populations.**

Equity is about ensuring that students have equal access to not only quality programs and services, but also to academic success. Ensuring academic success means providing instruction and resources to students based on their individual needs, not based on what worked for most students or even based on a formula or standardized procedure. Equity in the world of public education shifts district focus from what teachers and administrators do to what students need teachers and administrators to do. This means a comprehensive shift in priority, focusing on individual students and their needs, rather than system level priorities and needs. Such a shift in focus must take place at every level of the system to realize improvement in every student's academic achievement: system level, building level, and classroom level.

At the system level, areas of inequity must be monitored and addressed through system-wide efforts, such as new policy directives, professional development initiatives, or even staffing changes. Identifying areas of inequity in a district is achieved through data analysis, as well as anecdotal evidence collected from district stakeholders. Data must be disaggregated to the subgroup level to unveil disparities that might otherwise go unnoticed. Areas of inequity must also be identified, monitored, and addressed at individual building-level planning, such as the School Improvement Plan.

In the classroom, teachers monitor equity in similar ways but with a much smaller population, looking at test data by student subgroups, monitoring their own instructional strategies and behaviors, and ultimately evaluating whether students are making appropriate gains in achievement despite any demographic factors that might predict failure. What is fair for one student might in fact be unfair for another, being equitable (fair) many times means teachers must treat children unequally. The driving philosophy behind the concept of equity is that all students can attain academic success if they are given adequate support, instruction, and time. There are no exceptions, expectations must remain high for every single child, and failure is never considered an option. A child who fails to succeed academically is a failure on the part of the system.



Auditors found that while the district has an equity policy, there is a need for accompanying administrative regulations to effectively implement the policy and a need for an equity plan to monitor and evaluate equitable practices in the district (see **Finding 1.1**). Secondly, the auditors found that there is a disproportionate attendance, suspension/expulsion, and graduation rates for some students in the district, primarily students of color and those deemed at-risk. Third, access to advanced level curriculum as defined by CCR is disparate for some student populations. Fourth, student performance on state level tests lag behind their same grade level peers for English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-income students (see **Finding 3.3**). Finally, while equity is a topic of importance in policy, auditors found that professional development on equity and cultural understanding at both the district and building level is not consistently provided throughout the district nor is staff training monitored for effectiveness (see **Finding 3.2**).

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.5.1:** Revisit existing policies specifically focused on equity and equality and accomplishes the following:

- a. Define equity specifically in terms that clearly contrast it with equality. Specify when things are to be equal (access to resources, materials, courses) and when they are to be equitable (fair, just, and different to meet individual student differences).
- b. Require regular disaggregation (minimally every year) of all centrally collected assessment data by student subgroups (ethnicity, language, gender, Special Education, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged, non-Special Education, non-English language learners, and non-economically disadvantaged), and implement a plan to monitor subgroups' performance. Instruct district leaders to pay close attention to achievement gaps that fail to narrow over a reasonable amount of time, such as two years.
- c. Integrates English language learner policy requirements.
- d. Specify expectations for communication at all levels of the system to assure improved coordination and integration of district initiatives, department, and procedures.
- e. Establish the district expectation and prioritize for high quality student-centered instruction that is always culturally responsive and congruent with expected strategies in every classroom.
- f. Require a report on the status of equity and monitoring for it across the district.

**G.5.2:** Commit adequate resources to support implementation of the administrative actions in this recommendation.

**G.5.3:** Request periodic updates and reports from the superintendent on all issues related to equity, equality, and English language learners. Request periodic updates from the superintendent regarding equity across the district, using measures congruent with policy and directed by the equity and equal access plan. Require annual report to the Board of Education that includes progress of English language learners from one language proficiency level to another, the number of English language learners meeting and exceeding the state required proficiency level, progress towards meeting state academic standards, access to accelerated courses, enrollment in the special education program, disciplinary statistics, and graduation rates.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Stamford Public Schools Superintendent:

**A.5.1:** Assist the board in drafting new policy language to prioritize equity and equality across the district and to improve coordination and integration within the system as addressed in **G.5.1**.

**A.5.2:** Oversee the development of administrative procedures to support the implementation of board policies discussed in **G.5.1** and **G.5.2** that provide specific direction for the who, what, when, where, why, and how for policy implementation. Administrative procedures should include required plan components for underserved populations provided and defined in **Appendix H, Quality Criteria for Equity Policy**. Procedures should also include elements of a plan to implement initiatives and procedures for monitoring and supporting equity, equal access, communication, and consistency districtwide. The plan should contain the following components for action:

- a. Establish goals for equity, congruent with expectations in newly written equity policy.
- b. Clearly specify the necessary actions (in measurable terms) to attain district goals with a corresponding timeline and persons responsible.
- c. Define roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders in working toward equity and equal access.
- d. Describe procedures for monitoring actions and assigned tasks and initiatives.
- e. Include evaluation components to clearly demonstrate changes in professional practice that link directly meeting the needs of diverse learners and improving student performance.
- f. Collect data on the effectiveness of the plan's implementation.
- g. Review and evaluate the assigned actions periodically, with reports to the board.
- h. Revise the plan accordingly based on evaluation results.

**A.5.3:** Guided by administrative procedures, develop an Equity and Consistency/Equal Access plan with assistance from district staff including staff members and other identified stakeholders for assuring and monitoring for equity and equal access across the district. Having a plan in writing that defines expectations, responsibilities, and tasks is essential in establishing improved culture, realizing change, and improving accountability. Monitoring for equity is necessary since many inequities exist without stakeholders' knowledge or intent.

In addition to the main components outlined in **A.5.2**, integrate the following into the plan.

- a. Re-emphasize, across the district, the philosophy that serves as the foundation for assuring equity and equal access in all aspects of district decision-making processes and communications. With all definitions of equity, emphasize that challenge, rigor, and relevance are to go hand in hand with ensuring academic success and access for all students. A collaborative relationship with parents, school stakeholders, and the community is a priority in realizing this philosophy.
- b. Describe how high expectations for all students, regardless of race, income level, language proficiency, gender, etc., to be established throughout the planning process, will be upheld and enacted district wide. Specifically describe how those expectations are to be actualized in classrooms, in schools, and across the district in day-to-day actions. Connect these expectations with every professional development initiative or training in explicit ways.
- c. For each area where inequities and inconsistencies exist, establish goals (as specified in **A.5.2**) with action steps for remedying the inequities and inconsistencies. Be focused in identifying actions to take; too many initiatives or activities is not better. Rely on research and on what has worked in similar districts, keeping in mind the characteristics and student profiles unique

to Stamford Public Schools. Allow enough time for the initiatives to work. Hold each person assigned to the action steps accountable for their implementation and monitor results.

- d. Institutionalize the importance of equity in all curriculum management functions throughout the district: planning, monitoring, curricular revisions, curriculum delivery, etc. Establish steps to be taken in developing, reviewing, evaluating, and revising curriculum and accompanying resources to assure equity and equal access (see **Recommendation 2**). Assuring representation of all subgroups in materials and resources is critical.
- e. Direct the methods to be used in collecting data on equity across the district. Specify the instruments, measures, and procedures to be used to identify equity problems, to determine probable causes, and to evaluate the effect of the plan's action steps.
- f. Set expectations for inter-district collaboration and coordination. Ensure that all departments at the central office and all schools are communicating effectively, coordinating initiatives to minimize gaps and overlaps, and are working together toward a common goal.
- g. Determine the professional learning needed to accomplish the goals of the equity and consistency plan—for whom and when. Require training for personnel in sensitive positions, particularly in cultural sensitivity and culturally responsive instruction, as well as socio-emotional learning. Evaluate effectiveness of professional learning and modify, as needed based on new data or needs.
- h. Require “application-only” programs (e.g., International Baccalaureate) to monitor their student body enrollment by subgroups and gender to maintain proportionality in their enrollment.
- i. Monitor achievement by student subgroups at ALL levels, using progress-monitoring tools that align to the standards and that provide meaningful data.
- j. Establish procedures for building-based application for additional resources to support programming and/or equity-based allocations. Criteria for the application should focus on goals for the resource, rationale for needing them (supported with data), specific actions to be taken if granted the resources, and a plan for collecting data and results to evaluate effectiveness.

**A.5.4:** Assist the board in obtaining **ALL** stakeholders (district and school administrators and staff, parents, and community partners) commitment to equal access and equitable allocation of resources. Take steps to promote all students' success regardless of ethnicity, primary language, or economic status. Establish linkage to the budget process.

**A.5.5:** Require multiple measures to evaluate reasons for achievement gaps; identify the key factors that contribute to maintaining the gap. Determine the suitability of current efforts to eliminate gaps based on the new data.

**A.5.6:** Develop a comprehensive plan directing programming for English language learners to align with the district mission and goals and differentiates services for students at all grade levels. The plan should include the characteristics described in **Appendix J Design Criteria for EL Programming** and **Appendix K Delivery Criteria for EL Programming**. Review and evaluate existing plans and procedures to determine alignment with the characteristics.

**A.5.7:** Engage district and site staff in executing the design elements of the plan as outlined above in **A.5.6**.

**A.5.8:** Continue to implement a realistic plan, consistent with district policy (see **Finding 1.1**) to recruit administrators and teachers that reflect the ethnic and gender characteristics of the student population.

**A.5.9:** Coordinate all human resources, curriculum delivery, and campus administrator functions to prioritize instructional quality and promote equity across the district. Ensure that schools with the greatest needs (such as the highest percentages of at-risk students and greatest numbers of English language learners) have the most experienced and effective principals and teachers. Model and maintain an emphasis on meeting students' needs and demonstrating high expectations at all levels of the district. Integrate these functions with teacher evaluation and monitoring.

**A.5.10:** Establish the importance of high-quality, student-centered instruction, and require an instructional model that is centered on individual student needs: both for curriculum and for activities. The model should reflect the latest research concerning effective approaches and activities for culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students. Describe specifically what such instruction looks like in the classroom and require teachers to adhere to the model for instruction (see **Recommendation 2**).

**A.5.11:** Provide professional learning for both teachers and administrators in what effective instruction for Stamford Public Schools looks like. (See also **Recommendation 2**.) Academic improvement should not be consistent for every child, students who are below grade level must have accelerated instruction and learning opportunities, so they make faster gains than other students to ensure that they do not fall farther behind.

**A.5.12:** Beyond offering or requiring professional learning for teachers and administrators, require the implementation and monitoring of new learning in the classroom. Collect classroom observational trend data to determine whether professional learning is having the desired impact on teaching and learning. This differs from the walk-through in that the observational data are collected and analyzed in the following areas.

- a. Dominant student activities observed.
- b. Dominant teacher activities observed.
- c. Evidence of student work that gives testimony to adherence to the adopted instructional model.
- d. Evidence of powerful instructional strategies for each unique population of students.
- e. Evidence of cognitive rigor in both the materials/resources being used as well as in the students' activities.
- f. Evidence of cultural and linguistic responsiveness.
- g. Evidence of access to the core curriculum.

**A.5.13:** Require principals to monitor instruction for evidence of the instructional model and the framework for effective strategies and require them to monitor test scores for student gains in achievement for the high-risk populations discussed in **Findings 3.3** and **4.4**. This means monitoring a single cohort of students' gains over time—from year to year—to ensure their performance is improving (See **Recommendation 3**).

**A.5.14:** Regularly review site-based decision making for equity and equality, particularly the decisions that impact the delivery of the educational program and equitable access to learning opportunities. For example, analyze minutes of instructional time, access to the educational program in the classroom through appropriate differentiation, sheltering of content, accommodations, identification of and access to programs and services.

**A.5.15:** Require regular and accurate analysis of disaggregated data pertaining to all district practices (e.g., program enrollment, course offerings, disciplinary actions, and interventions to determine disparities and inequities). Use these analyses for equal and equitable and rational program and instructional decision-making.

**A.5.16:** Require that procedures defined for clustering students with special needs (English learner, special education) be used across schools for greater consistency. Having too many students from any subgroup in a single classroom also creates an inordinate burden for teachers, especially if multiple subgroups are in the same class: special education, and English learners.

**A.5.17:** Develop, with the assistance of the district central office personnel and other appropriate staff and stakeholders, strategies to help students experience success in the district's educational program and to incorporate such strategies into the District Strategic/Improvement Plans, department plans, and school improvement plans to create an aligned, coordinated, centralized system of support for all efforts to achieve equity and equality across the district.

**A.5.18:** Provide aggressive principal professional learning in effectively monitoring the delivery of curriculum content as well as providing English language development support in every classroom. Mentor principals on how to monitor and coach teachers more effectively to improve teachers' instruction and their students' achievement.

These recommendations, when implemented, should promote Stamford Public Schools full engagement in equal access and equitable practices for higher levels of learning by all students.

**Recommendation 6: Develop and implement a three-year plan that fully aligns district resources to curricular goals and strategic priorities and that includes systematic cost-benefit analyses to assure that expenditures are producing desired results and are directed to the areas of greatest need. Refine facility planning to fully align with audit expectations.**

Linkages between the budgets and programs that lead to predetermined priorities, goals, and strategies for improving student achievement are critical to the district's overall success. Intended results are lost or delayed when there is no thorough, systemic process to ensure that the financial plan represents the district's learning priorities. To allocate resources without comprehensive evaluation of results ignores the annual opportunity to strategically re-establish priorities and aggressively pursue intended results with new direction. In the absence of such comprehensive budgeting practices, system-wide effectiveness is more a matter of chance and special political interests than of intentional design.

The auditors found that the system's budgeting process historically has been missing critical steps and elements that provide connections from data to decisions and from allocations to results (see **Finding 5.1**). The lack of effective cost-benefit processes has resulted in an inability of the district to determine the effectiveness of programming weighed against program cost. In short, productivity of programs cannot be determined. Essentially, SPS needs to refine and revise budgeting processes to ensure the district accomplishes its mission to deliver quality learning experiences to its student clientele.

Numerous documents exist to direct facility planning in SPS. The auditors concluded that the district's facility planning meets audit criteria. An aggressive facility enhancement plan is in its early stages to address space concerns and aging buildings (see **Finding 5.3**).

The recommendations that follow are aimed to help the system to address weakness in its comprehensive budget planning and facility initiatives.



**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Board of Education of Stamford Public Schools:

**G.6.1:** Request the superintendent to prepare for board consideration a new policy and revised related job descriptions to provide overall direction for budgeting using criteria noted in **Exhibit 5.1.2** and in **A.6.1**.

**G.6.2:** Request the superintendent to establish procedures and prepare and/or revise documents that communicate the budgeting process and goals throughout the system, and require budget and staffing proposals to reflect a direct connection to established data-driven priorities.

**G.6.3:** Request the superintendent to set a budget development timeline to incorporate procedures identified in **A.6.3**.

**G.6.4:** Require, as part of the budget development process, a presentation from the administration to communicate how the proposed budget addresses the goals and priorities and responds to student and program evaluation data. The presentation should include an evaluation based upon measurable criteria of the effectiveness of the previous year's budget in achieving district priorities and those programs and interventions that are being revised or terminated on the basis of lack of effectiveness or lack of specificity in their objectives or intentions. This presentation should specifically include student achievement results connected to the budget proposals.

**G.6.5:** Request the superintendent to establish a three-year plan that, when implemented beginning with fiscal year 2025, will lead to successful implementation of actions **G.6.1** through **G.6.4**.

**G.6.6:** Request the superintendent develop a facility plan policy to include clear linkage of the facility needs and planned actions with the educational program priorities and student needs reflected in school and district improvement plans and this audit's findings and recommendations. Require that all stakeholders have opportunities for input as an integral part of facility planning.

**G.6.7:** Through policy, request the superintendent to present for board approval a comprehensive facility plan to include all individual documents and information provided to the auditors, and based on the criteria found in **Exhibit 5.2.2**.

**G.6.8:** Require annual reports (based on predetermined evaluation criteria) that communicate how effectively the facility plan is meeting the district's goals and priorities.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools:

**A.6.1:** Draft and propose the policy identified in **G.6.1**, and revise related job descriptions to include specific budget and related financial responsibilities in time for implementation with the 2025 fiscal year.

**A.6.2:** Establish procedures and prepare and/or revise budget documents that communicate the budgeting process and the goals the system is attempting to address, and require budget and staffing proposals to reflect a direct connection to the established data-driven priorities and assessment results (**G.6.2**).

**A.6.3:** Set the budget development process and timeline (**G.6.3**) to ensure that the budget planning processes are focused on specific, time-bound, and measurable goals. Clear connections must be established between the student performance information and the basic instructional and support areas of the budget. Undertake steps similar to the following to increase the connection of programs and priorities with budgeting decisions:



- a. Using the current construction of your budget, identify various educational activities or programs, and group them into areas of need or purpose served. This may include a more expansive inclusion of subcomponents found in the current budget.
- b. Assign a budget/program manager to each component. Direct them to prepare a concise and meaningful budget proposal for their respective areas. Ensure that building level budgets are fully accountable to the policy identified in **G.6.1** and the requirements described in **A.6.3**. Otherwise, the district is further subject to fragmentation, which may contribute to unequal results in achievement.
- c. Goal statements need to be attached to each program area or budget request to state the program's linkage to established goals and priorities, its purpose, the criteria for identifying success, and specifically how results will be evaluated and reported. (The actual evaluation of the program's effectiveness should be physically attached to each budget package request.)
- d. Each request should be described so as to permit evaluation of the consequences of funding or non-funding in terms of performance results. It is essential that this element be added to the current budget planning process. Teachers and principals must participate in the actual budget decision-making process to assure that valid data are used, knowledge of actual practice is available, and instructional efficacy is served.
- e. Compile the goal/linkage statements and budget packages and give them to appropriate staff to gather data that best describe needed service levels, program outcomes, and cost-benefits.
- f. Define program performance expectations and accountability for each program area with the involvement of staff (including principals, teachers, and support staff). Current results should be compared to desired expectations and related service level requirements. For example, to be successful, a specific program may need to be established at 110% of previous spending levels or at 75% of previous spending levels. Changes in funding may necessitate a comparable reduction from some other program or allow an increased allocation for another program judged to be of greater consequence.
- g. Each program manager must create three to five program alternatives that deliver an adequate and workable program at different levels of allocation.
- h. Prepare guidelines and recommendations and give them to the Director of Finance, who will then combine all recommendations into a single budget proposal listing funding by program increments and corresponding line items for each incremental package.
- i. Compile past cost information, especially expenditure percentages of budget, with performance data and recommendations to guide preliminary budget estimates. Assessment and documentation of previous program results are essential.
- j. Appoint a budget planning team, representing the various stakeholders, which will eventually bring the draft budget documents to the superintendent's leadership team to study the goals, priorities, and parameters inherent in the decisions being made for program funding. Discussions of cost-benefit information are critical at this stage. Where needed, budget plans should be extended over multiple years to assure consistency of effort and focus (**G.6.5**).
- k. The superintendent's leadership team evaluates and ranks the budget packages. Budget requests need to compete with each other for funding based upon data derived from evaluation of the priorities of need and level of program effectiveness. For example, specific academic curriculum

standards should be set regarding students' optimum access to and mastery of technology. Present inventories should be evaluated to determine the gap between current availability and access and what is judged as being optimum. Once completed, this budget package would compete with all other expenditures. To ensure equity an individual campus' ability to generate its own grants or gifts should also be considered in this equation (see **Finding 3.3**). The result will be that budget decisions are made deliberately on the basis of highest priority rather than by default.

- l. Compile results of the evaluation and ranking, and publish them in a tentative budget with programs listed in priority order. Use this draft with administrators for input before a draft is prepared for use as the presentation document.
- m. Build the capital outlay and building improvement budgets (see **Finding 5.1**) from a zero base each year, with multi-year planning for improvements, including life-cycle replacement and preventive maintenance. Prioritize decisions based on health and safety factors, the impact on learning, and protection of investment. Identify and communicate documented parameters for decisions on needs that are not considered health and safety matters. Many capital needs change annually and do not reoccur once met and paid for, such as durable goods and construction costs. The budget planning process should reflect these changes while projecting life-cycle replacement cost of buildings and systems over 5 to 20 years and technology over 5 years.
- n. Finalize budget allocations based on available revenues, the appropriation levels to be authorized, and program funding priorities and rankings. Prepare the recommended budget to be taken to the board of education for final evaluation and ranking.
- o. Use the public hearing process to communicate broadly the financial planning link with student needs, program priorities, and the results sought through the actions taken. Allow time for individual comment and questions. Prepare the final document after considering public information and board decisions.
- p. Establish final program and services to be funded at the level approved by the board of education, and set the budget in place.

**A.6.4:** Design the budget management process to allow for an acceptable variation (such as a plus or minus 3 to 5%), permitting program managers sufficient stability to achieve the desired results. Budget revisions should only occur when acceptable variations have been approved; failure to do so would violate board policies and regulations, sound accounting practices, and/or place the district financial jeopardy.

**A.6.5:** Provide training and consultation as needed for all affected staff members during the transition to a curriculum-driven budgeting process and format. In addition, all district and campus level personnel who have accounting or program evaluation responsibility should be required to demonstrate competency in their respective duties in order to avoid frustration and inefficiencies that occur when such competencies are not present.

**A.6.6:** Direct that long-range facility plans include clear linkage of the facility needs and planned actions to the educational program priorities and students needs reflected in school and district improvement plans and in this audit's findings and recommendations. Direct that all stakeholders have opportunities for input as an integral part of facility planning.

**A.6.7:** Prepare and present for board approval a comprehensive facility plan to include all individual documents and information provided to the auditors and based on the criteria found in **Exhibit 5.2.2**.

Further, and most critical, include the implementation of maximum security for school entrances, other access points, parking lots, and school grounds in the plan.

**A.6.8:** Prepare annual reports (based on predetermined evaluation criteria) that communicate how effectively the facility plan is meeting the district's goals and priorities.

### **Summary**

With an approach to budgeting based on individual program costs, results, and performance, the board of education and superintendent will be better equipped to monitor both finances and program effectiveness simultaneously. It is important to note that such a system cannot be implemented hastily. Needed policies and related job descriptions should be completed in the next six months. Evaluation components are added to each package as the district collects and interprets meaningful student achievement data, which should improve each year and be fully implemented in three years. Given this approach to budgeting, changes in funding or allocation levels are truly based on "How well are students doing?" instead of "How much did we spend last year?" or "How much do we think we may need?"

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Auditors' Biographical Data



**Jeffrey Tuneberg, PhD**

Jeffrey Tuneberg has over 30 years experience in education, including 25 years as Director of Curriculum with the Mercer County Educational Service Center, Celina, Ohio. His teaching background includes experience in urban (Cleveland, OH) and suburban settings, as well as overseas (Guam). He was selected as a Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program representative to Japan in 1997. Dr. Tuneberg is also an adjunct professor at Wright State University Lake Campus, Celina, Ohio, and Ashland University, Ohio, and as a credentialed faculty member with Battelle for Kids, Columbus, Ohio. He has served as a consultant to school districts on issues of teacher licensure, school improvement, and value-added student growth measures. Dr. Tuneberg received his BS in Education, MEd, and PhD from Bowling Green State University, Ohio. He received his Curriculum Management Audit training in Lima, Ohio, in 1999 and has conducted or served as a lead auditor on audits in 14 states.



**Lynne Christensen, EdD**

Lynne Christensen is currently retired and volunteers as a consultant in the Brockton, MA, area. She was previously a teacher in the regular classroom, teacher of talented and gifted students, and special education teacher. She became a building and central office administrator after approximately 15 years in the classroom, serving as a special education administrator, building principal, curriculum specialist, and data analyst. Dr. Christensen worked as an adjunct at the college/university level, teaching classes in general and special education, curriculum design and delivery, and supervised undergraduate and graduate student teachers.

She earned a bachelor's degree at Bridgewater State University in Bridgewater, Massachusetts; a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa; and earned a doctorate in Leadership in Schooling at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell.



### **Doris McEwen, PhD**

Doris McEwen is President/CEO of M.E.C.C.A. (McEwen Education Consulting and Curriculum Auditing). She has held leadership positions as dean of K-12 Readiness (Medgar Evers College – CUNY), deputy for curriculum and instruction at the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB), Distinguished P-12 Educator at the University of Washington (Seattle), vice-president/general manager for Pearson Education, superintendent of Clover Park School District (Lakewood, WA), and assistant superintendent in the Edmonds School District (WA). She has also held positions as associate professor at Indiana University (South Bend, IN); high school principal; high school, junior high and middle school assistant principal; director of research, evaluation and testing; alternative high school principal; and high school English teacher. Dr. McEwen completed her undergraduate degree at Northern Michigan University (Marquette, MI) and her masters and doctorate degrees at Michigan State University (East Lansing, MI). She holds a post-doctorate in educational policy from the Institute for Educational Leadership at George Washington University (Washington, D.C.). She received her curriculum management audit training in Atlanta, GA, in 1995 and has participated in numerous audits throughout the United States.



### **Sarah McKenzie, PhD**

Sarah McKenzie is Executive Director of the Office for Education Policy and an assistant research professor in the Department of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas. She serves as a subject matter expert on state report cards for the USDOE, taught Pre-K to university level, provides training and consulting to public school districts, and presents nationally and internationally on educational statistics. Dr. McKenzie received her PhD in Educational Statistics and Research Methods from the University of Arkansas, her MA in Early Childhood Education from Mills College, and her BA in Literature from Claremont McKenna College. Dr. McKenzie completed her curriculum audit training in Tucson, Arizona, in 2010.



### **Colleen E. Stearns, EdD**

Colleen E. Stearns currently lives in Belton, TX, and serves as the Vice President of Curriculum & Instruction at IDEA Public Schools. In this role, Dr. Stearns supervises the Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade academic program for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Spanish across 140 schools in Texas, Louisiana, and Florida, with a focus on supporting a team of content Directors and curriculum managers and the implementation of teacher and leader trainings. Prior to her current role, she was a teacher, reading specialist, campus administrator, district program coordinator, curriculum designer, and the Director of ELA at IDEA Public Schools. Dr. Stearns also teaches graduate level courses in Advanced Literacy, Elementary Methods, and Secondary English Language Arts and supervises Advanced Literacy interns who are completing their MEd in Advanced Literacy and pursuing the Texas Reading Specialist Certification. Colleen earned her BA at Southwestern University, and her MEd in Educational Administration and MEd in Advanced Literacy at Concordia University Texas. She completed her EdD in Curriculum & Instruction at Concordia University Texas with a focus on effective professional development for Advanced Placement mathematics and science teachers (*Professional Development for AP Mathematics and Science Teachers: A Qualitative Study of Teachers' Perspectives on Increasing Pedagogical Content Knowledge*).



#### **Susan N. Van Hoozer, MEd**

Sue Van Hoozer has been an educator for over 40 years. She was a teacher at the elementary level and taught developmental and remedial reading in middle school and high school in several districts in Texas. Mrs. Van Hoozer was an elementary principal, high school assistant principal, and high school principal in San Angelo, Texas. She worked in human resources and served as Executive Director of Schools, supervising principals, for the San Angelo Independent School District. Mrs. Van Hoozer worked as an Administrative Services Specialist for Education Service Center, Region 15 in San Angelo, where she provided technical assistance and professional development for principals, superintendents, and school trustees. She also taught in the Education department at Angelo State University.

Mrs. Van Hoozer received her BS and MEd degrees from Angelo State University. She completed audit training in Tucson, Arizona, in 2004, and has served as an auditor in districts in over 20 states.



#### **Olivia Elizondo Zepeda, MA**

Olivia Elizondo Zepeda graduated from Northern Arizona University with a BA in Elementary Education. She began her teaching career upon graduation from NAU and later earned a master's degree in Bilingual and Multicultural Education. Ms. Zepeda served as Associate Superintendent for the Gadsden Elementary School District from 2000 to 2017 and had previously served the district as director of curriculum and staff development, director of federal projects, and principal and teacher at the elementary and middle school. She is currently retired and serves on the Arizona Western College Board of Trustees. She has taught graduate and undergraduate classes at the university level and is fully bilingual in English and Spanish. Ms. Zepeda has a passion for service and enjoys working with agencies that provide assistance to children and adults for educational purposes. She completed her audit training in Austin, Texas, in June 2017 and has served on audits in Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Texas, Ohio, Missouri, and Arkansas.



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## Appendix B: Audit Methodology

### The Model for the Curriculum Audit™

The model for the Curriculum Audit™ is shown in the schematic below. The model has been published widely in the national professional literature, including the best-selling book, *The Curriculum Management Audit: Improving School Quality* (1995, Frase, English, Poston).

#### A Schematic View of Curricular Quality Control

General quality control assumes that at least three elements must be present in any organizational and work-related situation for it to be functional and capable of being improved over time. These are: (1) a work standard, goal/objective, or operational mission; (2) work directed toward attaining the mission, standard, goal/objective; and (3) feedback (work measurement), which is related to or aligned with the standard, goal/objective, or mission.

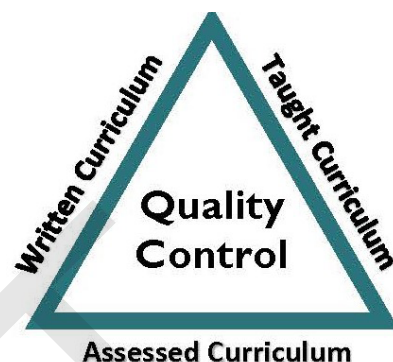
When activities are repeated, there is a “learning curve,” i.e., more of the work objectives are achieved within the existing cost parameters. As a result, the organization, or a subunit of an organization, becomes more “productive” at its essential short- or long-range work tasks.

Within the context of an educational system and its governance and operational structure, curricular quality control requires: (1) a written curriculum in some clear and translatable form for application by teachers in classrooms or related instructional settings; (2) a taught curriculum, which is shaped by and interactive with the written one; and (3) a tested curriculum, which includes the tasks, concepts, and skills of pupil learning and which is linked to both the taught and written curricula. This model is applicable in any kind of educational work structure typically found in mass public educational systems, and is suitable for any kind of assessment strategy, from norm-referenced standardized tests to more authentic approaches.

The Curriculum Audit™ assumes that an educational system, as one kind of human work organization, must be responsive to the context in which it functions and in which it receives support for its continuing existence. In the case of public educational systems, the support comes in the form of tax monies from three levels: local, state, and federal.

In return for such support, mass public educational systems are supposed to exhibit characteristics of rationality, i.e., being responsive to the public will as it is expressed in legally constituted bodies such as Congress, state legislatures, and locally elected/appointed boards of education.

In the case of emerging national public school reforms, more and more this responsiveness is assuming a distinctive school-based management focus, which includes parents, teachers, and, in some cases, students. The ability of schools to be responsive to public expectations, as legally expressed in law and policy, is crucial to their future survival as publicly-supported educational organizations. The Curriculum Audit™ is one method for ascertaining the extent to which a school system, or subunit thereof, has been responsive to expressed expectations and requirements in this context.



## Standards for the Auditors

While a Curriculum Audit™ is not a financial audit, it is governed by some of the same principles. These are:

### Expertise

CMSi-certified auditors must have actual experience in conducting the affairs of a school system at all levels audited. They must understand the tacit and contextual clues of sound curriculum management.

The Stamford Public Schools Curriculum Audit™ Team selected by the Curriculum Management Audit Center included auditors who have been school superintendents, assistant superintendents, directors, coordinators, principals and assistant principals, as well as elementary and secondary classroom teachers in public educational systems in several locations, including Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Ohio, Texas, and the Territory of Guam.

### Independence

None of the Curriculum Audit™ Team members had any vested interest in the findings or recommendations of the Stamford Public Schools Curriculum Audit™. None of the auditors has or had any working relationship with the individuals who occupied top or middle management positions in the Stamford Public Schools, nor with any of the past or current members of the Stamford Public Schools Board of Education.

### Objectivity

Events and situations that comprise the database for the Curriculum Audit™ are derived from documents, interviews, site visits, and online surveys. Findings must be verifiable and grounded in the database, though confidential interview data may not indicate the identity of such sources. Findings must be factually triangulated with two or more sources of data, except when a document is unusually authoritative, such as a court judgment, a labor contract signed and approved by all parties to the agreement, approved meeting minutes, which connote the accuracy of the content, or any other document whose verification is self-evident.

Triangulation of documents takes place when the document is requested by the auditors and is subsequently furnished. Confirmation by a system representative that the document is, in fact, what was requested is a form of triangulation. A final form of triangulation occurs when the audit is sent to the superintendent in draft form. If the superintendent or his/her designee(s) does not provide evidence that the audit text is inaccurate, or documentation that indicates there are omissions or otherwise factual or content errors, the audit is assumed to be triangulated. The superintendent's review is not only an additional source of triangulation, but is considered a summative triangulation of the entire audit report.

### Consistency

All CMSi-certified curriculum auditors have used the same standards and methodology since the initial audit conducted by Dr. Fenwick English in 1979. Audits are not normative in the sense that one school system is compared to another. School systems, as the units of analysis, are compared to a set of standards and positive/negative discrepancies cited.

### Materiality

CMSi-certified auditors have broad implied and discretionary power to focus on and select those findings that they consider most important to describing how the curriculum management system is functioning in a school district, and how that system must improve, expand, delete, or reconfigure various functions to attain an optimum level of performance.

### Confidentiality

Auditors must reveal all relevant information to the users of the audit, except in cases where such disclosure would compromise the identity of employees or patrons of the system. Confidentiality is respected in all audit interviews.

In reporting data derived from site interviews, auditors may use some descriptive terms that lack a precise quantifiable definition. For example:

“Some school principals said that...”

“Many teachers expressed concern that...”

“There was widespread comment about...”

The basis for these terms is the number of persons in a group or class of persons who were interviewed, as opposed to the total potential number of persons in a category. This is a particularly salient point when not all persons within a category are interviewed. “Many teachers said that...” represents only those interviewed by the auditors, or who may have responded to a survey, and not “many” of the total group whose views were not sampled, and, therefore, could not be disclosed during an audit.

In general these quantifications may be applied to the principle of full disclosure:

| Descriptive Term     | General Quantification Range  |
|----------------------|---|
| Some...or a few...   | Less than a majority of the group interviewed and less than 30%               |
| Many...              | Less than a majority, more than 30% of a group or class of people interviewed |
| A majority...        | More than 50%, less than 75%  |
| Most...or widespread | 75-89% of a group or class of persons interviewed                             |
| Nearly all...        | 90-99% of those interviewed in a specific class or group of persons           |
| All or everyone...   | 100% of all persons interviewed within a similar group, job, or class         |

It should be noted for purposes of full disclosure that some groups within a school district are almost always interviewed in toto. The reason is that the audit is focused on management and those people who have policy and managerial responsibilities for the overall performance of the system as a system. In all audits, an attempt is made to interview every member of the board of education and all top administrative officers, all principals, and the executive board of the teachers’ association or union. While teachers and parents are interviewed, they are considered in a status different from those who have system-wide responsibilities for a district’s operations. Students are rarely interviewed unless the system has made a specific request in this regard.

| Interviewed Representatives of the Stamford Public Schools |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Superintendent   | Central Office Administrators |
| Principals   | Board of Education Members    |
| Teacher’s Association Leadership                           | Teachers (Voluntary)          |

Approximately 234 individuals were interviewed during the site visit phase of the audit.

**Data Sources of the Curriculum Audit™**

A Curriculum Audit™ uses a variety of data sources to determine if each of the three elements of curricular quality control is in place and connected one to the other. The audit process also inquires as to whether pupil learning has improved as the result of effective application of curricular quality control.

The major sources of data for the Stamford Public Schools Curriculum Audit™ included the following:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Documents</b></p> <p>These sources consist of curriculum guides, memoranda, state reports, accreditation documents, assessment information, and any other source of information and data that reveal elements of the written, taught, and tested curricula and the linkages among these elements. <b>Appendix C</b> lists all documents reviewed over the course of the audit.</p>                | <p><b>Interviews</b></p> <p>The auditors conducted interviews with stakeholders throughout the district to shed light on district initiatives and documents and on the district context, as a whole. Interviews were conducted with all board members, the superintendent, top administrators in the system, all building principals, and several teachers. A total of 234 stakeholders were interviewed as part of the audit process.</p>  |
| <p><b>Site Visits</b></p> <p>Site visits reveal conditions in which students are learning and the related expectations for their performance that teachers and school leaders may hold. The school context is invaluable in revealing additional areas of inconsistency that may result from a lack of alignment between district expectations and site-level implementation of those expectations.</p> | <p><b>Online Surveys</b></p> <p>Selected stakeholders (teachers, administrators, community members, parents, and students, depending on district preference) are offered a comprehensive, online survey prior to or at the time of the site visit or off-site audit (simultaneous with the submission of documentation). The intent of the survey is to offer every stakeholder an opportunity to speak to the strengths and weaknesses of the system. Samples of the questions on these surveys are available.</p> |



## Appendix C: List of Documents Reviewed by the Stamford Public Schools Audit Team

| Document Reviewed   | Date      |
|---|-----------|
| Board Policies  | Various   |
| Job Descriptions  | Various   |
| Table of Organization   | 2021      |
| Technology Committee Minutes  | 2022      |
| Strategic Plan  | 2017-2022 |
| District Strategic Improvement Plan   | 2021-22   |
| District Strategic Improvement Plan   | 2020-21   |
| SPS District Technology Plan  | 2015-2018 |
| KT Murphy Elementary Strategic Improvement Plan                                   | 2021-22   |
| Cloonan Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan                                  | 2021-22   |
| Westhill High School Strategic Improvement Plan                                   | 2021-22   |
| APPLES School Strategic School Improvement Plan                                   | 2020-21   |
| Davenport Ridge School Strategic Improvement Plan                                 | 2020-21   |
| KT Murphy School Strategic Improvement Plan                                       | 2020-21   |
| Newfield School Strategic Improvement Plan  | 2020-21   |
| Northeast School Strategic Improvement Plan                                       | 2020-21   |
| Rogers International School Strategic Improvement Plan                            | 2020-21   |
| Roxbury School Strategic Improvement Plan   | 2020-21   |
| Springdale School Strategic Improvement Plan                                      | 2020-21   |
| Stark School Strategic Improvement Plan   | 2020-21   |
| Stillmeadow School Strategic Improvement Plan                                     | 2020-21   |
| Strawberry Hill School Strategic Improvement Plan                                 | 2020-21   |
| Toquam Magnet School Strategic Improvement Plan                                   | 2020-21   |
| Westover School Strategic Improvement Plan  | 2020-21   |
| Cloonan Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan                                  | 2020-21   |
| Dolan Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan                                    | 2020-21   |
| Rippowam Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan                                 | 2020-21   |
| Scofield Magnet Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan                          | 2020-21   |
| Turn of River Middle School Strategic Improvement Plan                            | 2020-21   |
| AITE School Strategic Improvement Plan  | 2020-21   |
| ANCHOR at Harbor Landing School Strategic Improvement Plan                        | 2020-21   |
| Stamford High School Strategic Improvement Plan                                   | 2020-21   |
| Westhill High School Strategic Improvement Plan                                   | 2020-21   |
| A Plan for Curriculum Management, Design, and Delivery in Stamford Public Schools | 2011      |
| Stamford Public Schools Public Website  | No Date   |
| Each School Public Website  | No Date   |
| Each Department Public Website  | No Date   |
| Program of Studies for the Stamford High Schools                                  | 2021-22   |
| Middle School Reference Guide   | 2017-18   |
| Curriculum documents provided by the district on a shared drive                   | Various   |

| Document Reviewed  | Date                                       |
|--|--|
| International Baccalaureate Program Website ( <a href="https://www.ibo.org/">https://www.ibo.org/</a> )                                | No Date                                    |
| District Profile Report from <a href="https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Performance/EdSight">https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Performance/EdSight</a> | Varies                                     |
| District Performance Index Reports, 2014 through 2019  | 2014-2019                                  |
| SPS Budget Presentation for Teaching and Learning (PowerPoint)   | 1.19.2021                                  |
| SPS Budget Presentation for School Development (PowerPoint)  | 1.21.2021                                  |
| SPS Budget Overview  | 11.13.2020                                 |
| SPS White Budget Book  | 7.1.2021                                   |
| SLAM Master Planning Report – Executive Summary  | 4.2022                                     |
| Educational Facility Assessments, Demographic Study & Master Planning (PowerPoint)   | 3.2022                                     |
| Educational Facility Assessments, Demographic Study & Master Planning (Community Meeting PowerPoint)                                   | 2.2022                                     |
| Long-Term Facilities Committee Community Engagement Forum Minutes  | 2.28.2022; 3.2.2022;<br>3.7.2022;3.10.2022 |
| Annual Report to the Community   | 2020                                       |

## Appendix D: Supporting Documents

### Exhibit D.1: Bloom's Revised Taxonomy and Description of Cognitive Types

| Cognitive Domain     | Definition of Type   | Additional Clarification Comments   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| <b>Remembering</b>   | Includes those behaviors and test situations that emphasize remembering, either by recognition or recall of ideas, material, or phenomena.   | Ranges from the specific and relatively concrete to the more complex and abstract, including interrelations and patterns in which information can be organized and structured. Remembering is the dominant psychological process. |
| <b>Understanding</b> | When confronted with written or oral communications, the student is expected to know what is being communicated and how to make some use of the materials or ideas contained in it.                    | Three types: translation, interpretation, extrapolation. Emphasis is on grasping the meaning and intent of the material.  |
| <b>Applying</b>      | Student must be able to apply comprehension without prompting in a situation new to the student. Requires transfer of knowledge and comprehension to a real situation.                                 | Emphasis is on remembering and bringing to bear upon a new situation.   |
| <b>Analyzing</b>     | Student must break down into component parts, make explicit the relationships between elements, and recognize organizational principles of the structure, which hold the elements together as a whole. | Emphasizes breaking wholes into pieces and the ability to detect structure, relationships, organization. Must have a specific purpose.  |
| <b>Evaluating</b>    | Making judgments about values for some purpose; ideas, works, solutions, methods, materials, etc.  | Involves the use of criteria as standards for appraising the degree to which something is effective, accurate, satisfying. May be quantitative or qualitative. Not merely opinions; must have salient criteria as its basis.      |
| <b>Creating</b>      | Putting together elements and parts to form a whole; to create pattern or structure not clearly there before.  | Emphasis is on the creative ability of students within a given framework. Must draw on elements from many sources. Should yield a product.  |

## Exhibit D.2: Explanation of Recorded Classroom Teacher Behaviors, Student Behaviors, and Student Groupings

| Predominant Teacher Instructional Behavior         |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Assisting students</b>                          | Refers to a teacher working with students in pairs, small lab groups, or individually about specific steps or actions the student(s) should take, not simply providing praise or feedback.   |
| <b>Direct instruction: Student-centered</b>        | Refers to the teacher facilitating or conducting whole group activities where students are actively engaged in discussion or generating and answering high level questions.  |
| <b>Direct instruction: Teacher-centered</b>        | Refers to the teacher verbally giving to or leading the entire class through a learning activity; e.g., lecture, demonstration, overhead projector, or low-level questioning.  |
| <b>Giving directions</b>                           | Refers to the teacher orally giving directions to the whole group or a small group of students for an upcoming classroom activity.   |
| <b>Individual instruction</b>                      | Refers to a teacher sitting with one student, teaching, reteaching, or otherwise meeting a student's individual needs.   |
| <b>Monitoring students</b>                         | Refers to the teacher circulating about the classroom, visually monitoring the students as they work, but not interacting with them.   |
| <b>Not engaged with students</b>                   | Refers to the teacher seated at his/her desk without students; e.g., correcting papers, taking attendance, reading, or doing other paperwork or computer work  |
| <b>Small group/pairs</b>                           | Refers to teacher working with a group of students that is less than approximately one-third of the total number of students in the classroom. Examples include working with reading groups, centers, students in groups trying to solve mathematical or science problems by deciphering information or analyzing data, or tutoring a small group. |
| Predominant Student Learning Behaviors             |  |
| <b>Computer work</b>                               | Refers to more than half the class actively using computers as part of their assigned work.  |
| <b>Lab/hands-on</b>                                | Refers to students completing a science lab procedure or other hands-on type of learning experience. Not limited to only science lab procedures.   |
| <b>Listening (passive)</b>                         | Refers to students listening to a lecture or directions given by the teacher without opportunity to actively participate in a discussion. Includes situations where the teacher is asking low-level questions that require only short, factual answers or choral responses.  |
| <b>Listening (active and participating)</b>        | Refers to students listening to the teacher or other students while actively involved in discussion and meaningful questioning. Includes opportunities where students are allowed to discuss with their peers, such as "turn and talk," before answering whole group.  |
| <b>Practice activity (problem solving)</b>         | Refers to students practicing or problem solving what they learned during the instruction.   |
| <b>Project (high level)</b>                        | Refers to learning as a building process designed to give students the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills through engaging projects set around challenges and problems they may face in the real world.   |
| <b>Reading (whole class or small groups)</b>       | Refers to at least two-thirds of the students in the class reading the same book silently or in small groups.  |
| <b>Reading (individual choice)</b>                 | Refers to at least two-thirds of the students in the class reading a book of their choice.   |
| <b>Small group collaborative work</b>              | Refers to students working in a group that is less than approximately one-third of the total number of students in the classroom. Examples include reading groups, centers, students in groups trying to solve mathematical or science problems by deciphering information or analyzing data, or being tutored by the teacher in a small group.    |
| Predominant Student Learning Behaviors (continued) |  |

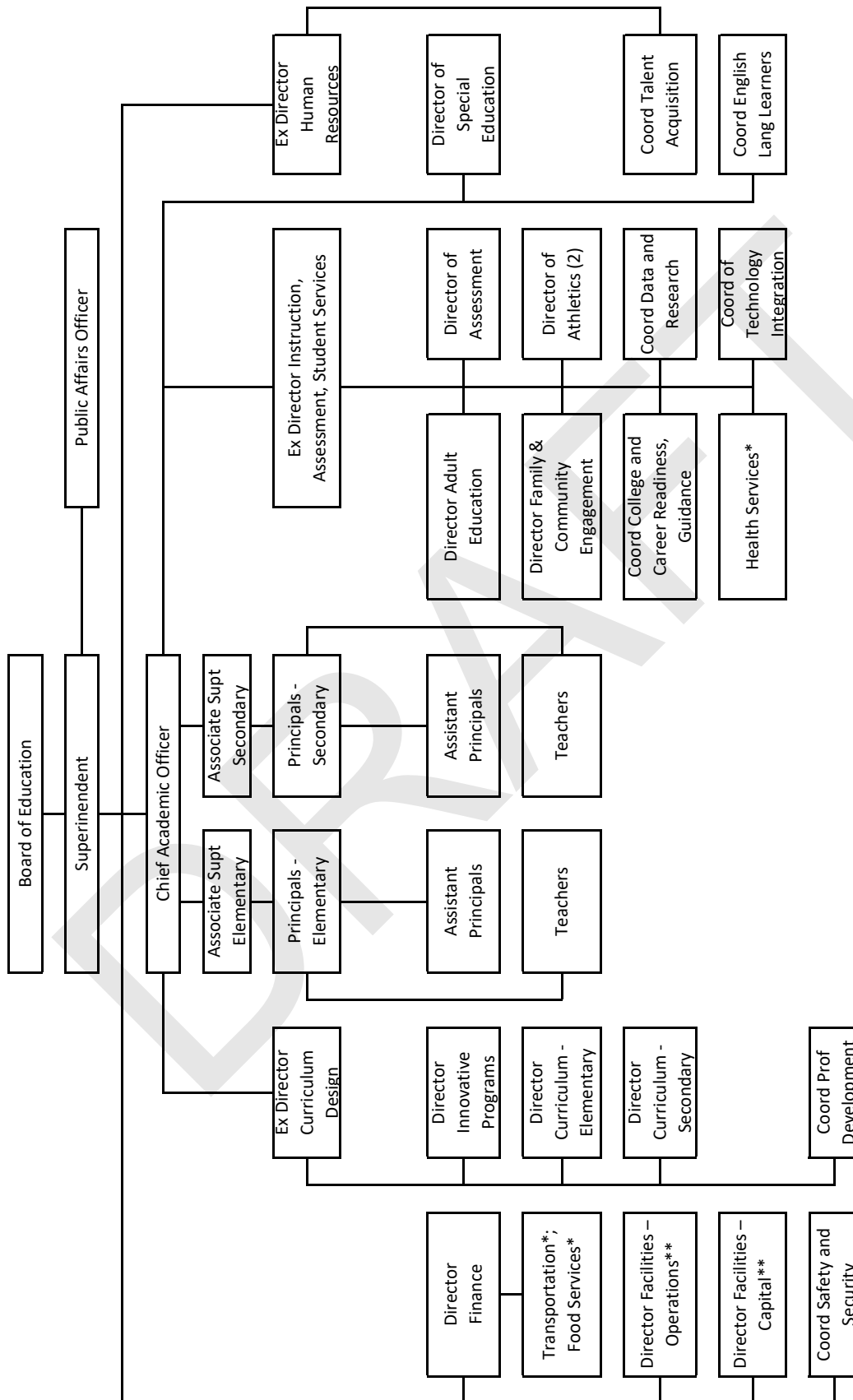
|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Speaking (presenting, answering, high level questions)</b> | Refers to an oral presentation that can be given as an individual or as part of a group. It also might add components of technology such as a slide show, video clip, or audio recording. Visual aids and teaching tools are used to further enhance the spoken words.                                |
| <b>Taking test</b>  | Refers to students taking a test.   |
| <b>Transition</b>   | Refers to students transitioning from one activity to another, such as putting away materials or moving to another location in the room to begin another activity.  |
| <b>Warm-up/review</b>   | Refers to students working on a warm-up activity at the beginning of a class period or reviewing previously learned objectives.   |
| <b>Watching video</b>   | Refers to students passively sitting and watching a video, with no accompanying written work (note-taking, analysis, etc.).   |
| <b>Working with manipulatives or models</b>                   | Refers to students, typically in pairs or small groups, using manipulatives or models such as foldables or math manipulatives to explore concepts.  |
| <b>Worksheet (low level)</b>                                  | Refers to students completing a prepared worksheet.   |
| <b>Writing (low level)</b>                                    | Refers to students either copying from the board or from a book.  |
| <b>Writing (high level)</b>                                   | Refers to at least two-thirds of the students in the class writing independently or in small groups. Writing refers to sentence, paragraph, or essay writing; not completing worksheets. High-level writing could be on a worksheet, if open-ended and engaging (as with certain graphic organizers). |
| <b>Predominant Student Grouping</b>                           |   |
| <b>Learning stations/ Centers</b>                             | Refers to students rotating to different small groups, while the teacher works with a small group of students.  |
| <b>Individual work</b>  | Refers to students working at their desks individually.   |
| <b>Small group</b>  | Refers to students working in small groups. The groups may be working on the same activity as other groups, or on different activities in each group.   |
| <b>Large group</b>  | Refers to students involved as a whole class in a common activity that could include receiving direct instruction, watching a movie, listening to a lecture, watching a demonstration, or students actively participating with the teacher and with each other.                                       |
| <b>Pair work</b>  | Refers to students working with one or two other students.  |



### Exhibit D.3: Explanation of the SAMR Model

| Level   | Definition  | Examples  | Functional Change   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Substitution</b>   | Computer technology is used to perform the same task as was done before the use of computers.   | Students print out a worksheet, finish it, pass it in.  | No functional change in teaching and learning. There may be times when this is appropriate, with no real gain to be had from computer technology. One needs to decide use based on other possible benefits. Tends to be teacher-centric, with teacher guiding all aspects of the lesson.  |
| <b>Augmentation</b>   | Computer technology offers an effective tool to perform common tasks.   | Students take a quiz using a Google Form instead of using paper and pencil.   | There is some functional benefit in that paper is saved, and students/teacher receive immediate feedback on student mastery of material. This level starts to move along the teacher- to student-centric continuum. Immediate feedback may encourage more engagement in learning.   |
| <b>Modification</b>   | This is the first step over the line between traditional and transformed classroom work. Common classroom tasks are accomplished through use of technology. | Students are asked to write an essay around the theme “And This I Believe...” Students make an audio recording, along with an original musical soundtrack. The recording is played in front of an authentic audience (e.g., parents, college admission counselors).           | There is significant functional change in the classroom. While all are learning similar writing/publication skills, the authentic audience gives students personal stakes in the quality of their work.<br><br>Computer technology is necessary for this, allowing peer and teacher feedback, easy rewriting, and audio recording. Questions about writing skills increasingly come from students themselves. |
| <b>Redefinition</b>   | Computer technology allows for new tasks that were previously inconceivable.  | Class is asked to create a documentary that answers an essential question related to important concepts.<br><br>Teams of students are responsible for different subtopics and are expected to gather information from outside sources. Class collaborates on a final product. | Common classroom tasks and technology support student-centered learning. Collaboration and technology both are necessary as students learn concepts and skills supporting important concepts. Collaboration is necessary as students are tasked with development of a high quality real-world product.<br><br>Questions and discussion are increasingly student-generated.                                    |
| Taken from <a href="https://sites.google.com/a/msad60.org/technology-is-learning/samr-model">https://sites.google.com/a/msad60.org/technology-is-learning/samr-model</a> [Accessed May 18, 2022]. |   |   |   |

## Appendix E: Recommended Table of Organization



\*Contracted Services

\*\*Stamford Asset Management Group

DRAFT

## Appendix F: Scope of Curriculum Documents in Grades 9-12

| Course                                       | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|  | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| <b>Core Courses</b>                          |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| <b>English Language Arts</b>                 |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| English 9/Sheltered English 9                | X            | X   | X    | X  | X                  |             |
| English 9 (honors)                           | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| English 10/Sheltered English 10              | X            | X   | X    | X  | X                  |             |
| English 10 (honors)                          | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| English 11/Sheltered English 11              | X            | X   | X    | X  | X                  |             |
| English 11 (honors)                          | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP English Language and Composition 11       | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE English Lang. and Comp. 11         | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| English 12/Sheltered English 12              | X            | X   | X    | X  | X                  |             |
| English 12 (honors)                          | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP English Literature and Composition 12     |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Creative Writing 1                           | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Creative Writing 2                           |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Diverse Perspectives in Literature           | X            | X   | X    | X  |                    | X           |
| English Lab 9                                | X            | X   | X    | X  |                    | X           |
| Literacy Lab                                 | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Credit Recovery 9                            | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Credit Recovery 11                           | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Language Studies                             | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Bridges English                              | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| People in Literature                         | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Reading                                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Science Fiction and Fantasy                  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Speech                                       | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Sports Literature                            | X            | X   |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Writing Center                               |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Writing Workshop                             | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Literature Through a Lens                    |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AVID (Advanced Via Individual Determination) | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| SAT Review                                   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Communications                               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Journalism                                   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Yearbook or Yrbk. Design and Publication     | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn Prep                                   | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Independent Study, Capstone Experience       | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Composition 12                               |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Web Newspaper 1                              |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Web Newspaper 2                              |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| IB Language and Lit. SL 1                    | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Language and Lit. SL 2                    | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Language and Lit. HL 1                    | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |

| Course  | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|---|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|   | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| IB Language and Lit. HL 2                             | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| Bileng-Kreyol Ayisyen (Bilingual Creole)              | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Eng. as a Second Language A1                          | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Eng. as a Second Language A2                          | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Eng. as a Second Language B1                          | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Eng. as a Second Language B2                          | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Eng. as a Second Language C1                          | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Eng. as a Second Language C2                          | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Eng. as a Second Language Adv. 1                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Eng. as a Second Language Adv. 2                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Freshman English Learner Lab 1                        | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Freshman English Learner Lab 2                        | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| EL Literacy Lab 1                                     | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| EL Literacy Lab 2                                     | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| New Arrivals EL Lab 1 (New Arrivals)                  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| New Arrivals EL Lab 2 (New Arrivals)                  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations in Literacy 1 (New Arrivals)              | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations in Literacy 2 (New Arrivals)              | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| EL Support  |              |     |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Academic Intervention – Literacy (Academic Support)   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Literacy Skills Center (Academic Support)             | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Communication Skills (Academic Support)               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Functional Academics (Academic Support)               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Total English Language Arts and Reading               |              |     |      |    | 10/64              |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum         |              |     |      |    | 16%                |             |
| Science   |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Physical Science Physics/Sheltered Phys. Sci. Physics | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Physical Science Chemistry/Sheltered Phys. Sci. Chem. | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Biology/Sheltered Biology                             | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Biology (honors)                                      | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Biology  |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Biology                                     | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Chemistry/Sheltered Chemistry                         | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Chemistry (honors)                                    | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Chemistry  |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Chemistry                                   | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Physics   | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Physics (honors)                                      | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Physics 1  | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Physics 2  | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Physics 1201Q                               | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Physics 1202Q                               | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Physics C  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn AP Physics C                                    | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |

| Course  | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|---|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|   | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| AP Environmental Science                            | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Environmental Science                     | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Applied Mechanics 1                       | X            |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Capstone Seminar                                 | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Capstone Research                                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Environmental Science                               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Earth Systems                                       | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Space Systems                                       | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Human Physiology                                    | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Consumer Chemistry                                  | X            | X   |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Marine Biology                                      | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Bioethics   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Biotechnology                                       | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Forensic Science                                    | X            | X   | X    | X  |                    | X           |
| Intro. to Robotics                                  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Independent Study Science Teaching                  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Science Research                                    | X            | X   | X    | X  |                    | X           |
| Public Health                                       |              | X   |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Conceptual Physics                                  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Environmental Geology                               |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Environmental Biology                               |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Forensic Science (honors)                           |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Photonics   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Principals of Biomedical Science                    |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Human Body Systems                                  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Medical Interventions                               |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Biomedical Innovations                              |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| IB Environmental Science Systems and Societies SL 1 | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Environmental Science Systems and Societies SL 2 | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Chemistry SL 1                                   | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Chemistry SL 2                                   | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Chemistry HL 1                                   | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Chemistry HL 2                                   | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Physics SL 1                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Physics SL 2                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Biology SL 1                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Biology SL 2                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Biology HL 1                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Biology HL 2                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| Química de Ciencias Físicas (Chemistry)             |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Biología (Biology)                                  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Física de Ciencias Físicas (Physics)                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations in Science 1 (New Arrivals)             | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations in Science 2 (New Arrivals)             | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |



| Course   | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|  | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Total Science  |              |     |      |    | 13/62              |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum                    |              |     |      |    | 21%                |             |
| Mathematics  |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Math 9   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Math 10  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Algebra I/Algebra I Sheltered                                    | X            | X   | X    | X  | X                  |             |
| Algebra I (honors)   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Geometry   | X            | X   | X    | X  | X                  | X           |
| Geometry (honors)  | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  | X           |
| Algebra II/Algebra II Sheltered                                  | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Algebra II (honors)  | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Advanced Algebra and Geometry                                    | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Algebra III and Trigonometry                                     | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Statistics and Probability                                       | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Pre-Calculus   | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  | X           |
| Pre-Calculus (honors)  | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Calculus   | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Calculus AB   | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Calculus AB  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Calculus BC   | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Multivariable Calculus   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Statistics  | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Statistics   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Applied Math: Introduction to Aerospace and Engineering          |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Applied Math: Introduction to Aerospace and Engineering (honors) |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. To Computer Science                                       | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Computer Science  |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Computer Science Principles                                   | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Data Structures and Algorithms                                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Computer-Based Investigative Mathematics                         | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Mathematical Logic and Inquiry                                   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Engineering Fundamentals   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Math Center  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Math Tutorial 9  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Math Lab 9   | X            | X   | X    | X  |                    | X           |
| Math Lab 10  | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Math Lab 11  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Math Lab 12  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Independent Study Math Teaching                                  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Bridges Math   | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Integrated Math 1  | X            | X   |      | X  | X                  |             |
| Integrated Math 2  | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches SL 1                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches SL 2                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |

| Course   | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|  | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches HL 1           | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches HL 2           | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations SL 1  | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations SL 2  | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| Matematicas Fundacionales 1 (Functional Mathematics)   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Matematicas Fundacionales 2                            |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Matematicas Fundacionales 3                            |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Matematicas Fundacionales 4                            |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Algebra I (Bilingual)                                  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Geometria (Bilingual)                                  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Algebra 2 (Bilingual)                                  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations in Math 1 (New Arrivals)                   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations in Math 2 (New Arrivals)                   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations in Math 3 (New Arrivals)                   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations in Math 4 (New Arrivals)                   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Academic Intervention – Mathematics (Academic Support) | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Math Skills Center (Academic Support)                  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Consumer Math  |              |     |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Total Mathematics                                      |              |     |      |    | 15/59              |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum          |              |     |      |    | 25%                |             |
| Social Studies   |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Social Studies 9/Sheltered Social Studies 9            | X            | X   |      | X  | X                  |             |
| Social Studies 9 (honors)                              | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Modern World History 10/Sheltered Mod. World Hist.     | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| World History (honors)                                 | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| World History and Geography                            |              |     |      | X  |                    | X           |
| AP World History                                       | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Civics/Sheltered Civics                                | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Civics 2   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Civics (honors)  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| U.S. History/Sheltered U.S. History                    | X            | X   | X    | X  | X                  |             |
| U.S. History (honors)                                  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE U.S. History                                 | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP U.S. History  |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP European History                                    | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE European History                             |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP U.S. Gov’t and Politics                             | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Honors Seminar in Philosophy                           | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Psychology  |              | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Economics  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Essentials of Economics                      |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Microeconomics                                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Microeconomics                               |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Macroeconomics                                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |

| Course  | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|---|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|   | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| UConn ECE Macroeconomics                        |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Applied Economics                               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Contemporary Issues                             | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. to Psychology                            | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Law and Justice                                 | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| American History through Pop Culture            | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| World Geography and Cultures                    | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Human Geography                              | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Women in American Society, Part I               | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Women in American Society, Part II              | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Stress Management and Intervention Strategies   | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Pre-AP World History and Geography              |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Genocide Studies                                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Educational Psychology                          |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Broadcasting                                    |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| African American/Latino Puerto Rican Studies    | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Social Studies 9: Modern World History          |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Social Studies 9: Modern World History (honors) |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| World History                                   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Early American History                          |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Pre-AP Early American History                   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| African History                                 |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Ancient World History                           |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Latin American Studies                          |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| The Middle Ages                                 |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Debate and Rhetoric                             |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Debate and Rhetoric (honors)                    |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Debate and Rhetoric (advanced)                  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Sociology                                       |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| IB Geography SL 1                               | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| IB Geography SL 2                               | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| IB Geography HL 1                               | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| IB Geography HL 2                               | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| IB History HL 1                                 | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB History HL 2                                 | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Psychology SL 1                              | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Psychology SL 2                              | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Psychology HL 1                              | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Psychology HL 2                              | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 1                        | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 2                        | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 3                        | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Research Foundations                         | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| Ciencias Sociales 9 (Social Science)            |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |

| Course   | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|  | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Historia Mundial Moderna (Modern World History)              |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Historia De Los Estados Unidos (U.S. History)                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Civica (Civics)  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Cultural Foundations/New Arrivals 1                          | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Cultural Foundations/New Arrivals 2                          | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Total Social Studies   |              |     |      |    | 16/72              |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum                |              |     |      |    | 22%                |             |
| Total Core Courses   |              |     |      |    | 54/257             |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum - Core Courses |              |     |      |    | 21%                |             |
| Non-Core Courses   |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Visual Art   |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Drawing and Painting 1                                       | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Drawing and Painting 2                                       | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Color and Design   | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Studio Art 2D  | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| 2D AP Art and Design 2D/Drawing                              | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| AP Art History   | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Ceramics 1   | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Ceramics 2   | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Potter’s Wheel 1   | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Potter’s Wheel 2   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Advanced Clay  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Crafts   | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Jewelry and Metalsmithing 1                                  | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Jewelry and Metalsmithing 2                                  | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| Photography 1  | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Photography 2  | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| AP Art and Design: Photography                               |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Sculpture 1  | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Sculpture 2  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Printmaking  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Computer Graphic Art and Design                              | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Working with Adobe Photoshop                                 | X            |     | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Art Partners   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Mindful Art  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Digital Foundations                                | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Drawing 1  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Advanced 3D Media  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Smart Phone and Digital Photography                          | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Two-Dimensional Design                                   | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Graphic Design 1: Skill and Principles                   | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Drawing 1  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Painting 1   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Animation  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |

| Course  | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|---|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|   | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Adobe Illustrator                                       |              |     | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Multimedia Presentation                                 |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Studio Art  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Architectural Drawing/CAD Technology                    |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Interactive Art Robotics                                |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| IB Visual Arts SL 1                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Visual Arts SL 2                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Visual Arts HL 1                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Visual Arts HL 2                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| Total Visual Arts                                       |              |     |      |    | 22/42              |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum           |              |     |      |    | 52%                |             |
| Music and Theater                                       |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Concert Choir   | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Concert Choir   | X            |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Advanced Choir: Chamber Singers                         |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Advanced Choir: Madrigal Singers                        | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Gospel Choir  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Voice Class   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Concert/Marching Band                                   | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Jazz Ensemble   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Orchestra   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Piano Instruction 1                                     | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Piano Instruction 2                                     | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Guitar Instruction 1                                    | X            |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Guitar Instruction 2                                    | X            |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Percussion  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Music Theory   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Fundamentals/Ear Training                     | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. to the Music Business                            |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Digital Music Production                                |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Digital Music Theory and Composition                    |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn Pop. Music and Diversity in American Society      | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Dramatic Arts   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Acting Workshop   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Total Music and Theater                                 |              |     |      |    | 0/22               |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum           |              |     |      |    | 0%                 |             |
| Career, Technology, and Business Education              |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Automotive Technology                                   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Wood Technology   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Video Technology  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. to Word Processing/Sheltered                     |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Tech. Skills for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century/Sheltered | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Information Tech.                                       | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Information Tech. and Design                            | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |

| Course  | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|---|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|   | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Accounting 1                                      | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Accounting 2                                      | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Adv. Principles of Accounting                     |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Business Concepts                                 | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Business Exploration                              | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Business Law                                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Career Pathways and Success Skills                | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Business Math/Sheltered Business Math             | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Entrepreneurship in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| International Business                            | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. to Investments and the Stock Market        | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Managerial Accounting                             | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Marketing in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century         | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Marketing Education 2                             | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Personal Finance                                  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Sports and Entertainment Managing and Marketing   | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Financial Planning (honors)                       |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Principles of Finance (honors)                    |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Business Economics (honors)                       |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Business in a Global Economy (honors)             |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Honors Accounting 1                               | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Web Design  | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. To Game Design                             | X            | X   |      |    | X                  | X           |
| Data Science (honors)                             |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Essentials of Economics                 | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Web Development and Design 1                  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Database Development 1                        | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Intro. to Programming                         | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Independent Study in Computer Science             |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Teacher's Aide in Computer Science                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Cybersecurity (honors)                            |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| CP Cybersecurity                                  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Computer Science A                             |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Information Technology and Design                 | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Technology Skills in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Business Publications                             |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Entrepreneurship (honors)                         |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Finance   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Introduction to Business                          |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| IB Business Management HL 1                       | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Business Management HL 2                       | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| Business Tech Skills for EL 1                     | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Business Tech Skills for EL 2                     | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |



| Course   | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|  | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Vocational Communications (Academic Support)     | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Employability Skills (Academic Support)          |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Pre-Vocational Skills (Academic Support)         | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Total Career, Technology, and Business Education |              |     |      |    | 7/54               |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum    |              |     |      |    | 13%                |             |
| World Language                                   |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| French 1   | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| French 2   | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| French 3   | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| French 4   | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| French (honors) 2                                |              | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| French (honors) 3                                |              | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| French (honors) 4                                |              | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| French (honors) 5                                |              | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| AP French (Fr. 5)                                |              | X   | VHS  |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE French                                 |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Introduction to American Sign Language           | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| American Sign Language 2                         | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Italian 1  | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Italian 2  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Italian 3  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Italian (honors) 3                               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Italian (honors) 4                               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Spanish 1  | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish 2  | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish 3  | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish 4  | X            | X   | X    |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish 5  | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish (honors) 2                               | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish (honors) 3                               | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish (honors) 4                               | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish (honors) 5                               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP Spanish Language                              | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Spanish Literature                            | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Heritage Spanish 1                               | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Heritage Spanish 2 (honors)                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Spanish                                |              | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Spanish Native Language Arts 1                   | X            | X   |      |    | X                  |             |
| Spanish Native Language Arts 2                   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Latin 1  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Latin 2  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Latin 3  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Latin 4  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Latin   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |

| Course  | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|---|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|   | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Mandarin Chinese 1                                  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Mandarin Chinese 2                                  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Mandarin Chinese 3                                  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Mandarin Chinese 4                                  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Chinese Language and Culture                     |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Russian 1   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Russian 2   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Russian 3   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Russian 4   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| AP Russian  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| IB Spanish 1  | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Spanish SL 1                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Spanish SL 2                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Spanish HL 1                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Spanish HL 2                                     | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Spanish Ab Initio SL 1                           | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| IB Spanish Ab Initio SL 2                           | X            |     |      |    | X                  |             |
| Total World Language                                |              |     |      |    | 25/55              |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum       |              |     |      |    | 45%                |             |
| Health and Wellness                                 |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Health 1/Health 1 Sheltered                         | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Health 2/Health 2 Sheltered                         | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Human Behavior 1                                    | X            | X   | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Human Behavior 2                                    | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Physical Education 9                                | X            | X   |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Physical Education 10                               | X            | X   |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Unified Physical Education                          | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Sports Medicine                                     | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Team Sports   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Leisure Sports                                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Fitness/Weight Training                             | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Cardio Fitness                                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Power Walking                                       | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Dance Forms   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Yoga  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Beginning Swimming                                  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intermediate Swimming                               | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Health and Education in Urban Communities | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Health Science Technology 1                         |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Health Science Technology 2                         |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Health Science Technology 3                         |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Adaptive Physical Education                         |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Physical Education 1                                |              |     | X    | X  |                    | X           |
| Physical Education 2                                |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |

| Course  | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|---|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|   | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Salud 1 (Health)  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Salud y Desarrollo Social 2 (Health and Social Development) |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Daily Living Skills (Academic Support)                      | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Vocational Skills (Academic Support)                        | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Leisure Skills (Academic Support)                           | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Travel Time (Academic Support)                              | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Daily Living Skills 2 (Academic Support)                    | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Community Involvement (Academic Support)                    |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Health Occupations  |              |     |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Total Health and Wellness                                   |              |     |      |    | 0/33               |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum               |              |     |      |    | 0%                 |             |
| Architecture and Engineering                                |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Introduction to Engineering and Design                      |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Digital Electronics   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Principles of Engineering                                   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Civil Engineering and Architecture                          |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Engineering Design and Development                          |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Interactive Art Robotics                                    |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Design  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Total Architecture and Engineering                          |              |     |      |    | 0/7                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum               |              |     |      |    | 0%                 |             |
| Agriculture/Animal Science                                  |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Agriscience and Technology 1                                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Agriscience and Technology 2                                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Veterinary Science  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Biotechnology   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Advanced Veterinary   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Advanced Animal Reproduction                                |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Animal Science and Technology                               |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. to Companion Animals-UConn ECE                       |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. to Companion Animals                                 |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Behavior and Training of Domestic Animals – UConn ECE       |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Horticulture  |              |     |      | X  |                    | X           |
| Aquaculture and Marine Science                              |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Greenhouse Management                                       |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Nursery Production and Landscape Design                     |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| AP/Uconn ECE Environmental Science                          |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Food Science  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Agribusiness Management and Marketing                       |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Floral Design   |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Total Agriculture/Animal Science                            |              |     |      |    | 0/18               |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum               |              |     |      |    | 0%                 |             |
| JROTC   |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Leadership, Education, and Training 1                       |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |

| Course   | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|  | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Leadership, Education, and Training 2                              |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Leadership, Education, and Training 3                              |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Leadership, Education, and Training 4                              |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Total JROTC  |              |     |      |    | 0/4                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum                      |              |     |      |    | 0%                 |             |
| Career and Technical Education – Family Sciences                   |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Rising Educators 1 (honors)  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Rising Educators 2 (honors)  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Child Development  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn ECE Individual and Family Development                        | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intro to Culinary Arts   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Culinary Arts Pro-Start 1  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Baking and Pastry/Pro-Start 2                                      | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| International Foods  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Interior Design 1  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Interior Design 2  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Fashion and Furnishings 1  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Fashion and Furnishings 2  |              | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Fashion Merchandising and Construction 1                           | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Fashion Merchandising and Construction 2                           | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Fashion Merchandising and Construction 3                           | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Total Career and Technical Education – Family Sciences             |              |     |      |    | 0/15               |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum                      |              |     |      |    | 0%                 |             |
| Career and Technical Education - Technology                        |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Intro. to Networks   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Routing and Switching Essentials                                   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Scaling Networks   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Connecting Networks  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Foundations of Information Technology                              |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Game Design and Development  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Advanced Game Design   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Computer Programming   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Studio Production 1  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Studio Production 2  |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. to Networking   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Internet of Things: Connecting Things                              |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Workplace Learning 1 (Early College at SHS)                        | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Workplace Learning 2 (Early College at SHS)                        | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Workplace Learning 3 (Early College at SHS)                        | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Web Development and Design 1 (Early College at SHS)            | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Intro. to Programming (Early College at SHS)                   | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Database Development 1 (Early College at SHS)                  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Two Dimensional Design (Early College at SHS)                  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| NCC Graphic Design 1: Skills and Principles (Early College at SHS) | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |

| Course   | High Schools |     |      |    | Written Curriculum |             |
|--|--------------|-----|------|----|--------------------|-------------|
|  | SHS          | WHS | AITE | An | Present            | Not Present |
| Robotics and Automated Systems 1 (Early College at SHS)  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Robotics and Automated Systems 2 (Early College at SHS)  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Intro. to Programming (Early College at SHS)   | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Web Development and Design (Early College at SHS)  | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| UConn Intro. to Computing for Engineers (Early College at SHS)   | X            |     |      |    |                    | X           |
| Total Career and Technical Education - Technology  |              |     |      |    | 0/25               |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum  |              |     |      |    | 0%                 |             |
| Service Learning   |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Student Assistant  | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Internship   | X            | X   |      |    |                    | X           |
| Student Assistant 12   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Technical Assistant 12   |              |     | X    |    |                    | X           |
| Total Service Learning   |              |     |      |    | 0/4                |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum  |              |     |      |    | 0%                 |             |
| Total Non-Core   |              |     |      |    | 54/279             |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum - Non-Core   |              |     |      |    | 19%                |             |
| Total Core and Non-Core  |              |     |      |    | 108/536            |             |
| Percentage of Courses with Written Curriculum - Core and Non-Core  |              |     |      |    | 20%                |             |
| Key: SHS = Stamford High School, WHS = Westhill High School, AITE = Academy of Information, Technology, and Engineering, IB = International Baccalaureate, An = Anchor Program, X = Whether or not a course curriculum guide is available. |              |     |      |    |                    |             |
| Sources: Program of Studies, public website for Stamford Public Schools, documents shared by the district, master schedules, and the IB website  |              |     |      |    |                    |             |

## Appendix G: Scope of Formal Assessments by Content Area Grades 9-12

| Courses Offered                                     | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Core Content Area Courses</b>                    |                           |                               |
| <b>English Language Arts</b>                        |                           |                               |
| Academic Intervention – Literacy (Academic Support) |                           | X                             |
| AP English Language and Composition 11              | X                         |                               |
| AP English Literature and Composition 12            | X                         |                               |
| Bileng-Kreyol Ayisyen (Bilingual Creole)            |                           | X                             |
| Bridges English                                     |                           | X                             |
| Communication Skills (Academic Support)             |                           | X                             |
| Communications                                      |                           | X                             |
| Composition 12                                      |                           | X                             |
| Creative Writing 1                                  |                           | X                             |
| Creative Writing 2                                  |                           | X                             |
| Credit Recovery 11                                  |                           | X                             |
| Credit Recovery 9                                   |                           | X                             |
| Diverse Perspectives in Literature                  |                           | X                             |
| EL Literacy Lab 1                                   |                           | X                             |
| EL Literacy Lab 2                                   |                           | X                             |
| EL Support  |                           | X                             |
| Eng. as a Second Language A1                        |                           | X                             |
| Eng. as a Second Language A2                        |                           | X                             |
| Eng. as a Second Language Adv. 1                    |                           | X                             |
| Eng. as a Second Language Adv. 2                    |                           | X                             |
| Eng. as a Second Language B1                        |                           | X                             |
| Eng. as a Second Language B2                        |                           | X                             |
| Eng. as a Second Language C1                        |                           | X                             |
| Eng. as a Second Language C2                        |                           | X                             |
| English 10 (honors)                                 | X                         |                               |
| English 10/Sheltered English 10                     | X                         |                               |
| English 11 (honors)                                 | X                         |                               |
| English 11/Sheltered English 11                     | X                         |                               |
| English 12 (honors)                                 |                           |                               |
| English 12/Sheltered English 12                     |                           | X                             |
| English 9 (honors)                                  | X                         |                               |
| English 9/Sheltered English 9                       | X                         |                               |
| English Lab 9                                       |                           | X                             |
| Foundations in Literacy 1 (New Arrivals)            |                           | X                             |
| Foundations in Literacy 2 (New Arrivals)            |                           | X                             |
| Freshman English Learner Lab 1                      |                           | X                             |
| Freshman English Learner Lab 2                      |                           | X                             |
| Functional Academics (Academic Support)             |                           | X                             |
| IB Language and Lit. HL 1                           |                           | X                             |
| IB Language and Lit. HL 2                           |                           | X                             |
| IB Language and Lit. SL 1                           |                           | X                             |



| Courses Offered  | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| IB Language and Lit. SL 2  |                           | X                             |
| Independent Study, Capstone Experience                           |                           | X                             |
| Journalism   |                           | X                             |
| Language Studies   |                           | X                             |
| Literacy Lab   |                           | X                             |
| Literacy Skills Center (Academic Support)                        |                           | X                             |
| Literature Through a Lens  |                           | X                             |
| New Arrivals EL Lab 1 (New Arrivals)                             |                           | X                             |
| New Arrivals EL Lab 2 (New Arrivals)                             |                           | X                             |
| People in Literature   |                           | X                             |
| Reading  |                           | X                             |
| SAT Review   | X                         |                               |
| Science Fiction and Fantasy                                      |                           | X                             |
| Speech   |                           | X                             |
| Sports Literature  |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE English Lang. and Comp. 11                             | X                         |                               |
| UConn Prep   | X                         |                               |
| Web Newspaper 1  |                           | X                             |
| Web Newspaper 2  |                           | X                             |
| Writing Center   |                           | X                             |
| Writing Workshop   |                           | X                             |
| Yearbook or Yrbk. Design and Publication                         |                           | X                             |
| Total English Language Arts                                      |                           | 11/63                         |
| Percentage of English Language Arts Courses Assessed             |                           | 17%                           |
| <b>Mathematics</b>   |                           |                               |
| Academic Intervention – Mathematics (Academic Support)           |                           | X                             |
| Advanced Algebra and Geometry                                    |                           | X                             |
| Algebra I (Bilingual)  |                           | X                             |
| Algebra II (Bilingual)   |                           | X                             |
| Algebra I (honors)   |                           | X                             |
| Algebra I/Algebra I Sheltered                                    |                           | X                             |
| Algebra II (honors)  |                           | X                             |
| Algebra II/Algebra II Sheltered                                  |                           | X                             |
| Algebra III and Trigonometry                                     |                           | X                             |
| AP Calculus AB   | X                         |                               |
| AP Calculus BC   | X                         |                               |
| AP Computer Science  | X                         |                               |
| AP Computer Science Principles                                   | X                         |                               |
| AP Data Structures and Algorithms                                | X                         |                               |
| AP Statistics  | X                         |                               |
| Applied Math: Introduction to Aerospace and Engineering          |                           | X                             |
| Applied Math: Introduction to Aerospace and Engineering (honors) |                           | X                             |
| Bridges Math   |                           | X                             |
| Calculus   |                           | X                             |

| Courses Offered                                       | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Computer-Based Investigative Mathematics              |                           | X                             |
| Consumer Math   |                           | X                             |
| Engineering Fundamentals                              |                           | X                             |
| Foundations in Math 1 (New Arrivals)                  |                           | X                             |
| Foundations in Math 2 (New Arrivals)                  |                           | X                             |
| Foundations in Math 3 (New Arrivals)                  |                           | X                             |
| Foundations in Math 4 (New Arrivals)                  |                           | X                             |
| Geometria (Bilingual)                                 |                           | X                             |
| Geometry  |                           | X                             |
| Geometry (honors)                                     |                           | X                             |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches HL 1          |                           | X                             |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches HL 2          |                           | X                             |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches SL 1          |                           | X                             |
| IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches SL 2          |                           | X                             |
| IB Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations SL 1 |                           | X                             |
| IB Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations SL 2 |                           | X                             |
| Independent Study Math Teaching                       |                           | X                             |
| Integrated Math 1                                     |                           | X                             |
| Integrated Math 2                                     |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Computer Science                            |                           | X                             |
| Matematicas Fundacionales 1 (Functional Mathematics)  |                           | X                             |
| Matematicas Fundacionales 2                           |                           | X                             |
| Matematicas Fundacionales 3                           |                           | X                             |
| Matematicas Fundacionales 4                           |                           | X                             |
| Math 9  | X                         |                               |
| Math 10   |                           | X                             |
| Math Center   |                           | X                             |
| Math Lab 10   |                           | X                             |
| Math Lab 11   |                           | X                             |
| Math Lab 12   |                           | X                             |
| Math Lab 9  | X                         |                               |
| Math Skills Center (Academic Support)                 |                           | X                             |
| Math Tutorial 9                                       | X                         |                               |
| Mathematical Logic and Inquiry                        |                           | X                             |
| Multivariable Calculus                                |                           | X                             |
| Pre-Calculus  |                           | X                             |
| Pre-Calculus (honors)                                 |                           | X                             |
| Statistics and Probability                            |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Calculus AB                                 |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Statistics                                  |                           | X                             |
| Total Mathematics                                     |                           | 9/59                          |
| Percentage of Mathematics Courses Assessed            |                           | 15%                           |
| <b>Science</b>  |                           |                               |
| AP Biology  | X                         |                               |

| Courses Offered                                     | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AP Capstone Research                                |                           | X                             |
| AP Capstone Seminar                                 | X                         |                               |
| AP Chemistry  | X                         |                               |
| AP Environmental Science                            | X                         |                               |
| AP Physics 1  | X                         |                               |
| AP Physics 2  | X                         |                               |
| AP Physics C  | X                         |                               |
| Bioethics   |                           | X                             |
| Biologia (Biology)                                  |                           | X                             |
| Biology (honors)                                    |                           | X                             |
| Biology/Sheltered Biology                           |                           | X                             |
| Biomedical Innovations                              |                           | X                             |
| Biotechnology                                       |                           | X                             |
| Chemistry (honors)                                  |                           | X                             |
| Chemistry/Sheltered Chemistry                       |                           | X                             |
| Conceptual Physics                                  |                           | X                             |
| Consumer Chemistry                                  |                           | X                             |
| Earth Systems                                       |                           | X                             |
| Environmental Biology                               |                           | X                             |
| Environmental Geology                               |                           | X                             |
| Environmental Science                               |                           | X                             |
| Física de Ciencias Físicas (Physics)                |                           | X                             |
| Forensic Science                                    |                           | X                             |
| Forensic Science (honors)                           |                           | X                             |
| Foundations in Science 1 (New Arrivals)             |                           | X                             |
| Foundations in Science 2 (New Arrivals)             |                           | X                             |
| Human Body Systems                                  |                           | X                             |
| Human Physiology                                    |                           | X                             |
| IB Biology HL 1                                     |                           | X                             |
| IB Biology HL 2                                     |                           | X                             |
| IB Biology SL 1                                     |                           | X                             |
| IB Biology SL 2                                     |                           | X                             |
| IB Chemistry HL 1                                   |                           | X                             |
| IB Chemistry HL 2                                   |                           | X                             |
| IB Chemistry SL 1                                   |                           | X                             |
| IB Chemistry SL 2                                   |                           | X                             |
| IB Environmental Science Systems and Societies SL 1 |                           | X                             |
| IB Environmental Science Systems and Societies SL 2 |                           | X                             |
| IB Physics SL 1                                     |                           | X                             |
| IB Physics SL 2                                     |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Robotics                                  |                           | X                             |
| Marine Biology                                      |                           | X                             |
| Medical Interventions                               |                           | X                             |
| Photonics   |                           | X                             |

| Courses Offered                                       | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Physical Science Chemistry/Sheltered Phys. Sci. Chem. |                           | X                             |
| Physical Science Physics/Sheltered Phys. Sci. Physics |                           | X                             |
| Physics   |                           | X                             |
| Physics (honors)                                      |                           | X                             |
| Principals of Biomedical Science                      |                           | X                             |
| Public Health   |                           | X                             |
| Química de Ciencias Físicas (Chemistry)               |                           | X                             |
| Space Systems   |                           | X                             |
| UConn AP Physics C                                    | X                         |                               |
| UConn ECE Applied Mechanics 1                         |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Biology                                     |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Chemistry                                   |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Environmental Science                       |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Physics 1201Q                               |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Physics 1202Q                               |                           | X                             |
| Total Science   |                           | 8/60                          |
| Percentage of Science Courses Assessed                |                           | 13%                           |
| <b>Social Studies</b>                                 |                           |                               |
| African American/Latino Puerto Rican Studies          |                           | X                             |
| African History                                       |                           | X                             |
| American History through Pop Culture                  |                           | X                             |
| Ancient World History                                 |                           | X                             |
| AP European History                                   | X                         |                               |
| AP Human Geography                                    | X                         |                               |
| AP Macroeconomics                                     | X                         |                               |
| AP Microeconomics                                     | X                         |                               |
| AP Psychology   | X                         |                               |
| AP U.S. Gov't and Politics                            | X                         |                               |
| AP U.S. History                                       | X                         |                               |
| AP World History                                      | X                         |                               |
| Applied Economics                                     |                           | X                             |
| Broadcasting  |                           | X                             |
| Ciencias Sociales 9 (Social Science)                  |                           | X                             |
| Cívica (Civics)                                       |                           | X                             |
| Civics (honors)                                       |                           | X                             |
| Civics 2  |                           | X                             |
| Civics/Sheltered Civics                               |                           | X                             |
| Contemporary Issues                                   |                           | X                             |
| Cultural Foundations/New Arrivals 1                   |                           | X                             |
| Cultural Foundations/New Arrivals 2                   |                           | X                             |
| Debate and Rhetoric                                   |                           | X                             |
| Debate and Rhetoric (advanced)                        |                           | X                             |
| Debate and Rhetoric (honors)                          |                           | X                             |
| Early American History                                |                           | X                             |

| Courses Offered                                    | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Economics  |                           | X                             |
| Educational Psychology                             |                           | X                             |
| Genocide Studies                                   |                           | X                             |
| Historia De Los Estados Unidos (U.S. History)      |                           | X                             |
| Historia Mundial Moderna (Modern World History)    |                           | X                             |
| Honors Seminar in Philosophy                       |                           | X                             |
| IB Geography HL 1                                  |                           | X                             |
| IB Geography HL 2                                  |                           | X                             |
| IB Geography SL 1                                  |                           | X                             |
| IB Geography SL 2                                  |                           | X                             |
| IB History HL 1                                    |                           | X                             |
| IB History HL 2                                    |                           | X                             |
| IB Psychology HL 1                                 |                           | X                             |
| IB Psychology HL 2                                 |                           | X                             |
| IB Psychology SL 1                                 |                           | X                             |
| IB Psychology SL 2                                 |                           | X                             |
| IB Research Foundations                            |                           | X                             |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 1                           |                           | X                             |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 2                           |                           | X                             |
| IB Theory of Knowledge 3                           |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Psychology                               |                           | X                             |
| Latin American Studies                             |                           | X                             |
| Law and Justice                                    |                           | X                             |
| Modern World History 10/Sheltered Mod. World Hist. |                           | X                             |
| Pre-AP Early American History                      |                           | X                             |
| Pre-AP World History and Geography                 |                           | X                             |
| Social Studies 9 (honors)                          |                           | X                             |
| Social Studies 9: Modern World History             |                           | X                             |
| Social Studies 9: Modern World History (honors)    |                           | X                             |
| Social Studies 9/Sheltered Social Studies 9        |                           | X                             |
| Sociology  |                           | X                             |
| Stress Management and Intervention Strategies      |                           | X                             |
| The Middle Ages                                    |                           | X                             |
| U.S. History/Sheltered U.S. History                |                           | X                             |
| U.S. History (honors)                              |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Essentials of Economics                  |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE European History                         |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Macroeconomics                           |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Microeconomics                           |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE U.S. History                             |                           | X                             |
| Women in American Society, Part I                  |                           | X                             |
| Women in American Society, Part II                 |                           | X                             |
| World Geography and Cultures                       |                           | X                             |
| World History                                      |                           | X                             |

| Courses Offered  | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| World History (honors)                                     |                           | X                             |
| World History and Geography                                |                           | X                             |
| <b>Total Social Studies</b>                                |                           | <b>8/72</b>                   |
| <b>Percentage of Social Studies Courses Assessed</b>       |                           | <b>11%</b>                    |
| <b>Total Core Content Area Courses</b>                     |                           | <b>36/254</b>                 |
| <b>Total Percent of Core Content Area Courses Assessed</b> |                           | <b>14%</b>                    |
| <b>Non-Core Content Area Courses</b>                       |                           |                               |
| <b>Languages Other Than English</b>                        |                           |                               |
| Introduction to American Sign Language                     |                           | X                             |
| American Sign Language 2                                   |                           | X                             |
| AP Chinese Language and Culture                            | X                         |                               |
| AP French (Fr. 5)  | X                         |                               |
| AP Latin   | X                         |                               |
| AP Russian   | X                         |                               |
| AP Spanish Language  | X                         |                               |
| AP Spanish Literature                                      | X                         |                               |
| French (honors) 2  |                           | X                             |
| French (honors) 3  |                           | X                             |
| French (honors) 4  |                           | X                             |
| French (honors) 5  |                           | X                             |
| French 1   |                           | X                             |
| French 2   |                           | X                             |
| French 3   |                           | X                             |
| French 4   |                           | X                             |
| Heritage Spanish 1   |                           | X                             |
| Heritage Spanish 2 (honors)                                |                           | X                             |
| IB Spanish 1   |                           | X                             |
| IB Spanish Ab Initio SL 1                                  |                           | X                             |
| IB Spanish Ab Initio SL 2                                  |                           | X                             |
| IB Spanish HL 1  |                           | X                             |
| IB Spanish HL 2  |                           | X                             |
| IB Spanish SL 1  |                           | X                             |
| IB Spanish SL 2  |                           | X                             |
| Italian 1  |                           | X                             |
| Italian 2  |                           | X                             |
| Italian 3  |                           | X                             |
| Italian (honors) 3   |                           | X                             |
| Italian (honors) 4   |                           | X                             |
| Latin 1  |                           | X                             |
| Latin 2  |                           | X                             |
| Latin 3  |                           | X                             |
| Latin 4  |                           | X                             |
| Mandarin Chinese 1   |                           | X                             |
| Mandarin Chinese 2   |                           | X                             |



| Courses Offered   | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mandarin Chinese 3  |                           | X                             |
| Mandarin Chinese 4  |                           | X                             |
| Russian 1   |                           | X                             |
| Russian 2   |                           | X                             |
| Russian 3   |                           | X                             |
| Russian 4   |                           | X                             |
| Spanish 1   |                           | X                             |
| Spanish 2   |                           | X                             |
| Spanish 3   |                           | X                             |
| Spanish 4   |                           | X                             |
| Spanish 5   |                           | X                             |
| Spanish (honors) 2  |                           | X                             |
| Spanish (honors) 3  |                           | X                             |
| Spanish (honors) 4  |                           | X                             |
| Spanish (honors) 5  |                           | X                             |
| Spanish Native Language Arts 1                              |                           | X                             |
| Spanish Native Language Arts 2                              |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE French  |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Spanish   |                           | X                             |
| Total Languages Other Than English                          |                           | 6/55                          |
| Percentage of Languages Other Than English Courses Assessed |                           | 11%                           |
| <b>Fine Arts</b>  |                           |                               |
| 2D AP Art and Design 2D/Drawing                             | X                         |                               |
| Acting Workshop   |                           | X                             |
| Adobe Illustrator   |                           | X                             |
| Advanced 3D Media   |                           | X                             |
| Advanced Choir: Chamber Singers                             |                           | X                             |
| Advanced Choir: Madrigal Singers                            |                           | X                             |
| Advanced Clay   |                           | X                             |
| Animation   |                           | X                             |
| AP Art and Design: Photography                              | X                         |                               |
| AP Art History  | X                         |                               |
| AP Music Theory   | X                         |                               |
| Architectural Drawing/CAD Technology                        |                           | X                             |
| Art Partners  |                           | X                             |
| Ceramics 1  |                           | X                             |
| Ceramics 2  |                           | X                             |
| Color and Design  |                           | X                             |
| Computer Graphic Art and Design                             |                           | X                             |
| Concert Choir   |                           | X                             |
| Concert Choir   |                           | X                             |
| Concert/Marching Band                                       |                           | X                             |
| Crafts  |                           | X                             |
| Digital Music Production                                    |                           | X                             |

| Courses Offered                                    | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Digital Music Theory and Composition               |                           | X                             |
| Dramatic Arts                                      |                           | X                             |
| Drawing 1  |                           | X                             |
| Drawing and Painting 1                             |                           | X                             |
| Drawing and Painting 2                             |                           | X                             |
| Gospel Choir                                       |                           | X                             |
| Guitar Instruction 1                               |                           | X                             |
| Guitar Instruction 2                               |                           | X                             |
| IB Visual Arts HL 1                                |                           | X                             |
| IB Visual Arts HL 2                                |                           | X                             |
| IB Visual Arts SL 1                                |                           | X                             |
| IB Visual Arts SL 2                                |                           | X                             |
| Interactive Art Robotics                           |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to the Music Business                       |                           | X                             |
| Jazz Ensemble                                      |                           | X                             |
| Jewelry and Metalsmithing 1                        |                           | X                             |
| Jewelry and Metalsmithing 2                        |                           | X                             |
| Mindful Art  |                           | X                             |
| Multimedia Presentation                            |                           | X                             |
| NCC Graphic Design 1: Skill and Principles         |                           | X                             |
| NCC Two-Dimensional Design                         |                           | X                             |
| Orchestra  |                           | X                             |
| Painting 1   |                           | X                             |
| Percussion   |                           | X                             |
| Photography 1                                      |                           | X                             |
| Photography 2                                      |                           | X                             |
| Piano Instruction 1                                |                           | X                             |
| Piano Instruction 2                                |                           | X                             |
| Potter's Wheel 1                                   |                           | X                             |
| Potter's Wheel 2                                   |                           | X                             |
| Printmaking  |                           | X                             |
| Sculpture 1  |                           | X                             |
| Sculpture 2  |                           | X                             |
| Smart Phone and Digital Photography                |                           | X                             |
| Studio Art   |                           | X                             |
| Studio Art 2D                                      |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Digital Foundations                      |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Drawing 1                                |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Fundamentals/Ear Training                |                           | X                             |
| UConn Pop. Music and Diversity in American Society |                           | X                             |
| Voice Class  |                           | X                             |
| Working with Adobe Photoshop                       |                           | X                             |
| Total Fine Arts                                    |                           | 4/64                          |
| Percentage of Fine Arts Courses Assessed           |                           | 6%                            |

| Courses Offered                                     | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>College, Career &amp; Leadership Development</b> |                           |                               |
| Internship  |                           | X                             |
| Leadership, Education, and Training 1               |                           | X                             |
| Leadership, Education, and Training 2               |                           | X                             |
| Leadership, Education, and Training 3               |                           | X                             |
| Leadership, Education, and Training 4               |                           | X                             |
| Student Assistant                                   |                           | X                             |
| Student Assistant 12                                |                           | X                             |
| Technical Assistant 12                              |                           | X                             |
| <b>Totals CC&amp;LD</b>                             |                           | <b>0/8</b>                    |
| <b>Percentage of CC&amp;LD Courses Assessed</b>     |                           | <b>0%</b>                     |
| <b>Health &amp; Physical Education</b>              |                           |                               |
| Health and Social Development                       |                           | X                             |
| Adaptive Physical Education                         |                           | X                             |
| Beginning Swimming                                  |                           | X                             |
| Cardio Fitness                                      |                           | X                             |
| Community Involvement (Academic Support)            |                           | X                             |
| Daily Living Skills (Academic Support)              |                           | X                             |
| Dance Forms   |                           | X                             |
| Fitness/Weight Training                             |                           | X                             |
| Health 1/Health 1 Sheltered                         |                           | X                             |
| Health 2/Health 2 Sheltered                         |                           | X                             |
| Health Occupations                                  |                           | X                             |
| Health Science Technology 1                         |                           | X                             |
| Health Science Technology 2                         |                           | X                             |
| Health Science Technology 3                         |                           | X                             |
| Human Behavior 1                                    |                           | X                             |
| Human Behavior 2                                    |                           | X                             |
| Intermediate Swimming                               |                           | X                             |
| Leisure Skills (Academic Support)                   |                           | X                             |
| Leisure Sports                                      |                           | X                             |
| Physical Education 1                                |                           | X                             |
| Physical Education 2                                |                           | X                             |
| Physical Education 9                                |                           | X                             |
| Physical Education 10                               |                           | X                             |
| Power Walking                                       |                           | X                             |
| Salud 1 (Health)                                    |                           | X                             |
| Salud y Desarrollo Social 2                         |                           | X                             |
| Sports Medicine                                     |                           | X                             |
| Team Sports   |                           | X                             |
| Travel Time (Academic Support)                      |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Health and Education in Urban Communities |                           | X                             |
| Unified Physical Education                          |                           | X                             |
| Vocational Skills (Academic Support)                |                           | X                             |

| Courses Offered                                       | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yoga  |                           | X                             |
| Total Health & PE                                     |                           | 0/33                          |
| Percentage of Health & PE Courses Assessed            |                           | 0%                            |
| <b>Career and Technical Education</b>                 |                           |                               |
| Accounting 1  |                           | X                             |
| Accounting 2  |                           | X                             |
| Adv. Principles of Accounting                         |                           | X                             |
| Advanced Animal Reproduction                          |                           | X                             |
| Advanced Game Design                                  |                           | X                             |
| Advanced Veterinary                                   |                           | X                             |
| Agribusiness Management and Marketing                 |                           | X                             |
| Agriscience and Technology 2                          |                           | X                             |
| Animal Science and Technology                         |                           | X                             |
| AP Computer Science A                                 | X                         |                               |
| AP/UConn ECE Environmental Science                    |                           | X                             |
| Aquaculture and Marine Science                        |                           | X                             |
| Automotive Technology                                 |                           | X                             |
| Baking and Pastry/Pro-Start 2                         |                           | X                             |
| Behavior and Training of Domestic Animals – UConn ECE |                           | X                             |
| Biotechnology   |                           | X                             |
| Business Concepts                                     |                           | X                             |
| Business Economics (honors)                           |                           | X                             |
| Business Exploration                                  |                           | X                             |
| Business in a Global Economy (honors)                 |                           | X                             |
| Business Law  |                           | X                             |
| Business Math/Sheltered Business Math                 |                           | X                             |
| Business Publications                                 |                           | X                             |
| Business Tech Skills for EL 1                         |                           | X                             |
| Business Tech Skills for EL 2                         |                           | X                             |
| Career Pathways and Success Skills                    |                           | X                             |
| Child Development                                     |                           | X                             |
| Civil Engineering and Architecture                    |                           | X                             |
| Computer Programming                                  |                           | X                             |
| Connecting Networks                                   |                           | X                             |
| CP Cybersecurity                                      |                           | X                             |
| Culinary Arts Pro-Start 1                             |                           | X                             |
| Cybersecurity (honors)                                |                           | X                             |
| Data Science (honors)                                 |                           | X                             |
| Design  |                           | X                             |
| Digital Electronics                                   |                           | X                             |
| Employability Skills (Academic Support)               |                           | X                             |
| Engineering Design and Development                    |                           | X                             |
| Entrepreneurship (honors)                             |                           | X                             |
| Entrepreneurship in the 21st Century                  |                           | X                             |

| Courses Offered                                   | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship             |                           | X                             |
| Fashion and Furnishings 1                         |                           | X                             |
| Fashion and Furnishings 2                         |                           | X                             |
| Fashion Merchandising and Construction 1          |                           | X                             |
| Fashion Merchandising and Construction 2          |                           | X                             |
| Fashion Merchandising and Construction 3          |                           | X                             |
| Finance   |                           | X                             |
| Financial Planning (honors)                       |                           | X                             |
| Floral Design                                     |                           | X                             |
| Food Science                                      |                           | X                             |
| Foundations of Information Technology             |                           | X                             |
| Game Design and Development                       |                           | X                             |
| Greenhouse Management                             |                           | X                             |
| Honors Accounting 1                               |                           | X                             |
| Horticulture                                      |                           | X                             |
| IB Business Management HL 1                       |                           | X                             |
| IB Business Management HL 2                       |                           | X                             |
| Independent Study in Computer Science             |                           | X                             |
| Information Tech.                                 |                           | X                             |
| Information Technology and Design                 |                           | X                             |
| Interactive Art Robotics                          |                           | X                             |
| Interior Design 1                                 |                           | X                             |
| Interior Design 2                                 |                           | X                             |
| International Business                            |                           | X                             |
| International Foods                               |                           | X                             |
| Internet of Things: Connecting Things             |                           | X                             |
| Intro to Companion Animals                        |                           | X                             |
| Intro to Culinary Arts                            |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Companion Animals-UConn ECE             |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Game Design                             |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Investments and the Stock Market        |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Networking                              |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Networks                                |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Programming (Early College at SHS)      |                           | X                             |
| Intro. to Word Processing/Sheltered               |                           | X                             |
| Introduction to Business                          |                           | X                             |
| Introduction to Engineering and Design            |                           | X                             |
| Managerial Accounting                             |                           | X                             |
| Marketing Education 2                             |                           | X                             |
| Marketing in the 21st Century                     |                           | X                             |
| NCC Database Development 1                        |                           | X                             |
| NCC Database Development 1 (Early College at SHS) |                           | X                             |
| NCC Graphic Design 1: Skills and Principles       |                           | X                             |
| NCC Intro. to Programming                         |                           | X                             |

| Courses Offered  | Formal Assessment Present | Formal Assessment Not Present |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| NCC Intro. to Programming (Early College at SHS)   |                           | X                             |
| NCC Two Dimensional Design (Early College at SHS)  |                           | X                             |
| NCC Web Development and Design 1   |                           | X                             |
| NCC Web Development and Design 1 (Early College at SHS)  |                           | X                             |
| Nursery Production and Landscape Design  |                           | X                             |
| Personal Finance   |                           | X                             |
| Pre-Vocational Skills (Academic Support)   |                           | X                             |
| Principles of Engineering  |                           | X                             |
| Principles of Finance (honors)   |                           | X                             |
| Rising Educators 1 (honors)  |                           | X                             |
| Rising Educators 2 (honors)  |                           | X                             |
| Robotics and Automated Systems 1 (Early College at SHS)  |                           | X                             |
| Robotics and Automated Systems 2 (Early College at SHS)  |                           | X                             |
| Routing and Switching Essentials   |                           | X                             |
| Scaling Networks   |                           | X                             |
| Sports and Entertainment Managing and Marketing  |                           | X                             |
| Studio Production 1  |                           | X                             |
| Studio Production 2  |                           | X                             |
| Teacher's Aide in Computer Science   |                           | X                             |
| Tech. Skills for the 21st Century/Sheltered  |                           | X                             |
| Technology Skills in the 21st Century  |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Individual and Family Development  |                           | X                             |
| UConn ECE Essentials of Economics  |                           | X                             |
| UConn Intro. to Computing for Engineers  |                           | X                             |
| Veterinary Science   |                           | X                             |
| Video Technology   |                           | X                             |
| Vocational Communications (Academic Support)   |                           | X                             |
| Web Design   |                           | X                             |
| Web Development and Design (Early College at SHS)  |                           | X                             |
| Wood Technology  |                           | X                             |
| Workplace Learning 1 (Early College at SHS)  |                           | X                             |
| Workplace Learning 2 (Early College at SHS)  |                           | X                             |
| Workplace Learning 3 (Early College at SHS)  |                           | X                             |
| <b>Total Career and Technical Education</b>  |                           | <b>1/117</b>                  |
| <b>Percentage of CTE Courses Assessed</b>  |                           | <b>1%</b>                     |
| <b>Total Non-Core Content Area Courses</b>   |                           | <b>11/277</b>                 |
| <b>Total Percent of Non-Core Content Area Courses Assessed</b>   |                           | <b>4%</b>                     |
| <b>Total Core and Non-Core Content Area Courses</b>  |                           | <b>47/531</b>                 |
| <b>Total Percent of Core and Non-Core Content Area Courses Assessed</b>  |                           | <b>9%</b>                     |
| Note: Courses listed may include class offerings using various titles (see Exhibits 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 for a full list of individual classes) |                           |                               |
| Data Sources: Stamford Public Schools public website and shared documents  |                           |                               |



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## Appendix H: Quality Criteria for Equity Policy

### Vision and Accountability

1. Clarifies vision and mission for equity.
2. Defines philosophical beliefs and values related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
3. Requires monitoring of equity practices and expectations and provides for accountability measures when compliance is not evident.

### Curriculum Management

1. Defines goals and plan expectations.
2. Specifies expectations for roles and responsibilities.
3. Defines equity goals specific to the following:
  - Curriculum Design: format, structure, components;
  - Delivery: instructional expectations (best practice, culturally relevant instruction), student engagement and cognitive demand, behavior management, program access, and implementation;
  - Evaluation: purposes, philosophy, alignment to delivery expectations, instruments and grading practices.

### Delivery and Consistency

1. Clarifies processes for monitoring goal achievement.
2. Defines guidelines for supports to enable work: professional development, monitoring, appraisal, etc.
3. Specifies expectations for alignment and coordination of all district plans (and related goals) with strategic and equity plans.
4. Requires definition of vision, mission, and implementation for special programs, in alignment with equity plan.
5. Specifies expectations concerning managing behavior and discipline and monitoring fidelity to policy.
6. Notes expectations for system-wide communication of goals and required actions and results.

### **Feedback and Evaluation**

1. Specifies guidelines for evaluating student progress, in alignment with vision and philosophy statements.
2. Outlines all data to be monitored regularly related to equity, what instruments will be used for evaluating progress, and what reports are required (and with what frequency).
3. Notes specific expectations for data disaggregation and dissemination.

### **Budget and Productivity**

1. Specifies guidelines for financial allocations and budgeting practices, specifically requiring that resources flow to areas of greatest need.
2. Defines expectations for procedures to enact when current measures are not productive.

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## Appendix I: Years to Parity

**Exhibit I.1: Years to Parity Analysis, Mathematics and ELA Performance Index, Economically Disadvantaged and Non-Economically Disadvantaged Students, 2015-2019**

| Subgroup   | Subject/Grade   | Performance Index |      |      |      |       |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|------|------|------|-------|
|  |                 | 2015              | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019  |
| Mathematics  |                 |                   |      |      |      |       |
| Non-Economically Disadvantaged                                     | Math—All Grades | 66.5              | 69.8 | 70.2 | 72.5 | 71.1  |
| Economically Disadvantaged   | Math—All Grades | 50.3              | 51.7 | 53.8 | 53.9 | 53.9  |
| Difference:  |                 | 16.2              | 18.1 | 16.4 | 18.6 | 17.2  |
| Change in difference (1st year difference-Final year difference):  |                 |                   |      |      |      | -1.0  |
| Gain by year (Change in difference)/(number of years-1):           |                 |                   |      |      |      | -0.25 |
| Years to Parity (Final Year gap/gain by year):                     |                 |                   |      |      |      | Never |
| ELA  |                 |                   |      |      |      |       |
| Non-Economically Disadvantaged                                     | ELA—All Grades  | 73.1              | 74.4 | 73.3 | 75.3 | 74.0  |
| Economically Disadvantaged   | ELA—All Grades  | 58.4              | 57.9 | 58.3 | 58.7 | 58.5  |
| Difference   |                 | 14.7              | 16.2 | 15.0 | 16.6 | 15.5  |
| Change in difference (1st year difference-Final year difference):  |                 |                   |      |      |      | -0.8  |
| Gain by year (Change in difference)/(number of years-1):           |                 |                   |      |      |      | -0.2  |
| Years to Parity (Final Year gap/gain by year):                     |                 |                   |      |      |      | Never |
| Data Source: District Performance Index Reports, 2014 through 2019 |                 |                   |      |      |      |       |

**Exhibit I.2: Years to Parity Analysis, Mathematics and ELA Performance Index, English Learner and Non-English Learner Students, 2015-2019**

| Subgroup   | Subject/Grade   | Performance Index |      |      |      |          |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|------|------|------|----------|
|  |                 | 2015              | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019     |
| Mathematics  |                 |                   |      |      |      |          |
| Non-English Language Learners                                      | Math—All Grades | 60.6              | 62.6 | 64.6 | 64.0 | 63.8     |
| English Language Learners  | Math—All Grades | 44.5              | 44.6 | 49.6 | 48.6 | 48.6     |
| Difference   |                 | 16.1              | 18.0 | 15.0 | 15.4 | 15.2     |
| Change in difference (1st year difference-Final year difference):  |                 |                   |      |      |      | 0.90     |
| Gain by year (Change in difference)/(number of years-1):           |                 |                   |      |      |      | 0.23     |
| Years to Parity (Final Year gap/gain by year):                     |                 |                   |      |      |      | 66 Years |
| ELA  |                 |                   |      |      |      |          |
| Non-English Language Learners                                      | ELA—All Grades  | 68.2              | 68.1 | 68.5 | 68.2 | 67.7     |
| English Language Learners  | ELA—All Grades  | 50.8              | 49.4 | 52.6 | 51.7 | 51.9     |
| Difference   |                 | 17.4              | 18.7 | 15.9 | 16.5 | 15.8     |
| Change in difference (1st year difference-Final year difference):  |                 |                   |      |      |      | 1.6      |
| Gain by year (Change in difference)/(number of years-1):           |                 |                   |      |      |      | 0.4      |
| Years to Parity (Final Year gap/gain by year):                     |                 |                   |      |      |      | 40 Years |
| Data Source: District Performance Index Reports, 2014 through 2019 |                 |                   |      |      |      |          |

**Exhibit I.3: Years to Parity Analysis, Mathematics and ELA Performance Index, Special Education and Non-Special Education Students, 2015-2019**

| Subgroup   | Subject/Grade   | Performance Index |      |      |      |          |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|------|------|------|----------|
|  |                 | 2015              | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019     |
| Mathematics  |                 |                   |      |      |      |          |
| Non-Special Education  | Math—All Grades | 61.5              | 63.2 | 65.1 | 64.9 | 65.0     |
| Special Education  | Math—All Grades | 35.7              | 37.9 | 38.6 | 38.7 | 37.8     |
| Difference   |                 | 25.8              | 25.3 | 26.5 | 26.2 | 27.2     |
| Change in difference (1st year difference-Final year difference):  |                 |                   |      |      |      | -1.4     |
| Gain by year (Change in difference)/(number of years-1):           |                 |                   |      |      |      | -0.35    |
| Years to Parity (Final Year gap/gain by year):                     |                 |                   |      |      |      | Never    |
| ELA  |                 |                   |      |      |      |          |
| Non-Special Education  | ELA—All Grades  | 68.9              | 68.4 | 68.6 | 68.6 | 68.5     |
| Special Education  | ELA—All Grades  | 42.7              | 44.5 | 44.3 | 44.5 | 44.0     |
| Difference   |                 | 26.2              | 23.9 | 24.3 | 24.1 | 24.5     |
| Change in difference (1st year difference-Final year difference):  |                 |                   |      |      |      | 1.7      |
| Gain by year (Change in difference)/(number of years-1):           |                 |                   |      |      |      | 0.43     |
| Years to Parity (Final Year gap/gain by year):                     |                 |                   |      |      |      | 57 years |
| Data Source: District Performance Index Reports, 2014 through 2019 |                 |                   |      |      |      |          |

## Appendix J: Criteria for Design Quality of Programs and Services for English Language Learners (ELLs) with Auditors' Rating

| Characteristics of Quality of Design of District-level Plans for Programs and Services for English Language Learners (ELLs) |   |
|---|---|
| There is evidence of...   |   |
| 1.  | <b>Direction:</b> The governing board has placed into policy an expectation that programs and services for ELLs will be designed and delivered in ways that allow students to meet or exceed all standards for English language proficiency and content area mastery as quickly as possible while providing equal access to the core curriculum.  |
| 2.  | <b>Reasonableness:</b> The district's plan/program design is reasonable and sufficient in that it has a feasible number of goals and objectives for the resources (financial, time, people) available.  |
| 3.  | <b>Comprehensiveness and equal access:</b> The documentation is designed to meet the needs of ELLs throughout the system to acquire proficiency in academic English through focused English Language Development over a reasonable time frame (5-7 years*). The plan provides for students to have full and comprehensible access to the core curriculum through sheltered instruction and/or primary language support. The plan includes an explicit description of the district's instructional models for ELD and sheltered instruction. |
| 4.  | <b>Rationale:</b> The district has a rationale for the approach used that would be accepted by proponents in the field.   |
| 5.  | <b>Student identification and progress:</b> Systems are in place for the identification, placement, and monitoring of progress (in English Language Development [ELD] and content areas) of <i>each</i> English Language Learner.   |
| 6.  | <b>Organizational capacity:</b> The plan/program design is built on effective staff improvement strategies, particularly in building the capacity of staff to serve the specialized needs of ELLs.  |
| 7.  | <b>Special assistance for newcomers:</b> The plan/program design includes provisions for specialized services and support for students entering the district with virtually no prior schooling in English nor any observable English language proficiency to assist with rapid acquisition of survival English and acculturation.   |
| 8.  | <b>Translation:</b> The plan/program design outlines a procedure for translating documents, forms, notices, etc., and providing translators as needed for both written and oral forms of communication with parents.  |
| 9.  | <b>Integration:</b> The programs and services included in the plan for ELL students are aligned to major district-wide goals and priorities as well as to expectations for all students.  |
| 10.   | <b>Budget:</b> Budget planning takes into account the needs of ELLs and assigns appropriate and adequate resources to support the programs and services implemented.  |
| 11.   | <b>Evaluation:</b> There is a written plan for evaluation of all programs and services for ELLs.  |
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## Appendix K: Criteria for Delivery Quality, Connectivity, and Monitoring of Programs and Services for English Language Learners (ELLs) with Auditors' Rating

| Characteristics of Delivery Quality, Connectivity, and Monitoring of Programs and Services for English Language Learners (ELLs) |  |
|---|--|
| There is evidence that...   |  |
| 1.  | <b>English Language Development (ELD)</b> Each ELL student receives specific instruction aimed at improving his or her academic English proficiency (oral, reading, writing), and listening comprehension targeted at his or her level of English Proficiency (EPL).   |
| 2.  | <b>Access to the Core Curriculum:</b> ELL students have equal access to academic content in the core curriculum through a variety of sheltering strategies employed in the regular classroom (SDAIE or SIOP) and/or primary language support and integration.  |
| 3.  | <b>Special Assistance for Newcomers:</b> Students entering the district with virtually no prior schooling in English nor any observable English language proficiency receive specialized services and support to assist with rapid acquisition of survival English and cultural proficiency.   |
| 4.  | <b>Connectivity:</b> Programs and services for ELL students are integrated into the district and schools as a whole; there is minimal duplication of effort; shared data, resources, communication, and ownership for the success of all ELL students supports service delivery; and expectations for ELLs are consistent with those for all students. |
| 5.  | <b>Representation in Programs:</b> ELL students are proportionately represented in specialized programs such as Special Education, Gifted and Talented, Advanced Placement, etc.   |
| 6.  | <b>Translation:</b> To ensure equal access, translation services are provided for parents for important communications, screenings, meetings, and other situations where parents must make decisions regarding their child's schooling.  |
| 7.  | <b>Monitoring</b> Each student's English proficiency level is assessed at least annually; his/her progress through the various levels to redesignation is monitored; assignment to classes and programs is consistent with the student's proficiency in English; monitoring and assistance continue for at least two years after redesignation.        |
| 8.  | <b>Budget:</b> Budget implementation provides adequate resources to support programs and services.   |
| 9.  | <b>Evaluation:</b> Data are routinely gathered on all aspects of the program for English Language Learners, and modifications at the student, group, or program level are made when needed.  |
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