

We Are NM



North Middlesex Regional School District **Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan**

Executive Summary

The North Middlesex Regional School District is pleased to share its Student Opportunity Act (SOA) plan. This plan will focus on student learning and addressing disparities between specific student populations and our overall student data for the next three years (through June 2027) with the overall goal of providing ALL of our student learners with meaningful and powerful experiences to maximize their growth academically, socially, emotionally and behaviorally.

Based on public data that is available from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the enrollment size of each subgroup, and the overall impact that the various indicators (absenteeism, suspensions, ninth grade passing, dropouts and graduation rates) were having on academic performance (MCAS), we decided to focus our work through this plan on students with disabilities.

Our Theory of Action is: If we identify and utilize research-based approaches to decrease school suspensions and identify alternative pathways for students interested in dropping out for our students with disabilities subgroup, then we will see increased performance on state testing (MCAS) and an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities that meet the competency determination and graduation requirements within 3 years.

The District has selected the following Evidence-Based improvement areas to address the disparities in learning experiences and outcomes for the 'Students with Disabilities' subgroup. Funding to support these efforts are supported through both the curriculum office and special education department budgets:

- **1.1A - Promoting Integrated Services for Student Wellbeing** - Integrated Services for Student Wellbeing
- **1.2A - Implementing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that helps all students progress both academically and in their social, emotional, and behavioral development:** Effective Student Support Systems
- **2.2B - Using the MTSS process to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students, particularly students with disabilities and multilingual learners:** High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

Analysis of Data and Selection of student groups for focused support

<p>In conducting your data analysis, where did you observe the most significant disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes? On which measures and for which student groups?</p>	<p>Using DESE's Student Outcome Comparison Tool, we were able to pinpoint the following disparities:</p> <p><u>English Language Learners Subgroup</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chronic Absenteeism• Percentage of Ninth Graders Passing• Percentage of students (grade 3 only) meeting/exceeding performance on MCAS (both ELA and Math) <p><u>Students with Disabilities Subgroup</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of Out of School Suspensions• Percentage Dropping Out (2022)• Percentage graduating within 5 years (2021)• Percentage of students meeting/exceeding performance on MCAS<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Grade 6/8 ELA○ Grade 6/8/10 Math <p><u>Low Income Student Subgroup</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chronic Absenteeism• Percentage of Out of School Suspensions• Percentage of Ninth Graders Passing <p><u>Multi-race non-Hispanic or Latino Subgroup</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage Dropping Out (2022)• Percentage graduating within 5 years (2021)• Percentage of students (grade 6/8 only) meeting/exceeding performance on MCAS Math
<p>What does your deeper analysis (including the triangulation of multiple types of data) suggest are the best ways to address these disparities across student groups?</p>	<p>Based on the data, enrollment size of each subgroup, and the overall impact that the various indicators (absenteeism, suspensions, ninth grade passing, dropouts and graduation rates) were having on academic performance (MCAS), we decided to focus our work through the SOA on students with disabilities.</p> <p>Our Theory of Action is: If we identify and utilize research-based approaches to decrease school suspensions and identify alternative pathways for students interested in dropping out for our students with disabilities subgroup, then we will see increased performance on state testing (MCAS) and an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities that meet the competency determination and graduation requirements within 3 years.</p>
<p><i>Based on your identification of the greatest disparities in outcomes, which student groups will require focused support for rapid improvement as you implement your evidence-based programs over the next three years?</i></p>	<p>English Learners Students with Disabilities Low-Income Specific Racial Subgroup</p>

Three-Year Targets for Improving Student Achievement

DESE has established a three-year improvement target for each district to include in their SOA plans that focuses on rapidly improving the performance of the “Lowest Performing Students” group. This group, by definition, includes the students who currently have the lowest academic performance, and therefore need the most significant levels of support to reduce the disparities between their performance and that of their Peers.

The North Middlesex Regional School District will use DESE’s three-year targets for increasing performance for the “Lowest Performing Students” group in ELA and math.

Engaging with Families/Caregivers and Other Stakeholders

<p>Describe the approaches your district uses to regularly engage with families/caregivers. In your response, please be sure to address what steps you will be taking to meaningfully engage with families/caregivers of student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement as this plan is implemented.</p>	<p><u>Communicating information to families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• weekly/bi-weekly newsletter communication to families from each building which includes building specific information, as well district level information (shared electronically, and in print if requested, in the language that families have selected as their preferred means of communication)• District newsletter for families that is provided electronically <p><u>Family Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title I parent workshops• Collaboration with SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council) regarding workshops and family needs• School Councils• PTO meetings• Superintendent's Advisory Council
<p>How do you plan to measure increased family engagement with parents and caregivers of students in targeted groups in your district over the next three years?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family surveys• Attendance at family events• Participation in student conferences and other parent meetings
<p>Describe the ways in which you engaged different stakeholder groups in the development of your three-year SOA Plan. How have you integrated the perspectives of those groups into the three-year plan? How will you continue to engage stakeholders throughout the implementation of your plan?</p>	<p>Draft plan (with opportunity for input), along with periodic updates will be provided to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Councils• Superintendent's Advisory Council• SEPAC Leadership• Shared to all families in Superintendent's Newsletter• Shared with all staff through bi-weekly curriculum office newsletter

Evidence-Based Programs to Address Disparities in Outcomes

FOCUS AREA 1.1A: Promoting Students’ physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces - Integrated Services for Student Well-Being	
Description of Actions Under this EBP	<p>The district has the following strategies in place that address this focus area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Middle school advisory ● CASEL Aligned SEL curriculum in all buildings ● SEL Committee ● Mechanism to track all referrals and hospitalizations across all buildings ● Mental health team meets monthly to discuss trends and needs - and what supports can be provided ● DCAP Accommodations (and training for staff on use of DCAP to identify and provide supports for students) ● A dedicated mental health/student well-being page on our website for families ● Partnership with CARE SOLACE to support student mental health needs ● Continue to work with SEPAC around identification of family workshops <p>The district anticipates implementing the following actions and supports to be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (June 2027)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PD with paraprofessionals (around mental health issues and supporting student academic and SEL needs) ● PD for all staff: Social Emotional and behavioral ● Creation of a toolbox of resources and supports (for staff, students, and families) ● Presentation from outside organizations - providing wrap around supports for kids in crisis ● PD around Trauma informed practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tiered Plan for BCBAs to support students within each building ○ counselors meeting on a regular basis
Funding Source to Support this EBP	Support for this EPB will be funded through line items with the curriculum office (staff development) and special education department (PD/staff development) line items
Metrics to monitor progress in this EBP?	<p>The district will utilize the following metrics to monitor progress in this EPB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review of data for student hospitalization (decrease in students requiring hospitalization; increase in the plans that are developed to facilitate a smooth transition from a hospitalization) ● Parent surveys (improved experience when working with school/hospital to transition their child back) ● Mental health meetings (increase in frequency of building-based meetings) ● Review of referral data following mental health hospitalization (decrease in the percentages of general education students who are hospitalized that turn into referrals as well as the percentages of those referrals that turn into special education placements/eligibility) ● Review of attendance data (decrease in students identified as being chronically absent)

FOCUS AREA 1.2A: Implement a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that helps all students progress both academically and in their social, emotional, and behavioral development - Effective Student Support System

<p><i>Description of Actions Under this EBP</i></p>	<p>The district anticipates the following supports/strategies to be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027) relative to this focus area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creation of an RTI system ● Improving the quality of ISST (Individualized Student Support Team) meetings to track individual cases ● Professional Development activities - for staff (on MTSS, RTI, and ISST Interventions) ● Refinement of District attendance plan (to address chronic absenteeism) ● Restorative Practices Professional Development for staff ● Expansion of Responsive Classrooms Training for middle school staff ● Refinement of High School advisory block/flex time to support range of student needs ● Increase teacher training in the use of a multisensory systematic approach to reading and language instruction ● Continued training for all staff in the use of High Quality Instructional Materials/Programs and aligning SPED Pull-out instruction with ● high leverage instructional practices embedded in core programs
<p><i>Funding Source to Support this EBP</i></p>	<p>Support for this EPB will be funded through line items with the curriculum office (staff development and instructional staff) and special education department (PD/staff development) line items</p>
<p><i>Metrics to monitor progress in this EBP?</i></p>	<p>The district will utilize the following metrics to monitor progress in this EPB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Referral Data (decrease in the number of referrals for special education evaluations due to effective implementation of RTI/MTSS/ISST plans/processes) ● improved student performance on district and state assessments ● Review of attendance data (decrease in students identified as being chronically absent) ● Student dropout rates (decrease in percentage of students dropping out - particularly for identified subgroups) ● Student graduation rate (increase in the percentage of students that are meeting the local graduation requirements, the state competency determination requirements, and graduating within five years (particular focus on identified student subgroups))

FOCUS AREA 2.2B: Use the MTSS process to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students, particularly students with disabilities and multilingual learners, equitable access to deeper learning - High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

<p><i>Description of Actions Under this EBP</i></p>	<p>The district currently uses a variety of high quality instructional programs (EL Education, Illustrative Math, Project Lead the Way, and Investigating History) to support student learning across the content area. Each of these programs intentionally incorporate a number of research based high leverage instructional practices. All staff, including our special education teachers, have been trained in these programs and in utilizing the high leverage instructional practices in the implementation of these programs. The district has also contracted with EL Education to elevate the high leverage practices in all content areas and classes, including pullout classrooms for students with more significant disabilities. During the 2023-2024 school year, the central office curriculum leadership team has conducted walkthroughs in all buildings, alongside building administration, to identify patterns of strength and areas for continued professional growth related to the use of high leverage practices. Using this data, each building has developed their own PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) to help staff focus on areas of overall need within the building. We have included our special education staff and programs in all of this work.</p> <p>Additionally, the district has received a DESE grant this year to implement strategies around Deeper Learning. We are participating in the training and anticipate incorporating some of those concepts and approaches into our work with staff. We will continue to leverage funds from the Student Opportunity Act over the next three years to help teachers continue to develop and grow in their use of high leverage instructional practices. By June 2027, we anticipate all teachers will be fluent in identifying the practices, implementing them in their classrooms, and making adjustments to the practices based on student data. We also anticipate that walkthroughs and learning walks will be common practice in all of our buildings, with teachers from multiple disciplines and grade levels (including special education staff) participating in and leading these conversations.</p>
<p><i>Funding Source to Support this EBP</i></p>	<p>Support for this EPB will be funded through line items with the curriculum office (staff development, administration and instructional staff) line items</p>
<p><i>Metrics to monitor progress in this EBP?</i></p>	<p>We are currently conducting three walkthroughs each year as an instructional leadership team (central office staff, building leadership, and teachers) to monitor the use of selected high leverage instructional practices in the classrooms. We collect data about the percentage of classroom observations where the various practices are 'evident' (observable and accessible for at least 85% of the students in the class), somewhat evident (observed and accessible for less than 85% of the students in the classroom), or not observed. This helps us to pinpoint how to support teachers, particularly with diverse student learners (including students with disabilities and multilingual learners), in ensuring that all students have equitable access to the instructional practices.</p> <p>The 2023-2024 school year will serve as a baseline for our work and we will be able to utilize this data to measure growth over the next three years.... this will also help to inform professional development and curriculum decisions for all learners.</p>

