

Education

Sudbury Public Schools Superintendent's Report

The Sudbury Public Schools has continued to meet the emerging needs of students in the 2023-2024 school year as we increased staffing levels to address the academic and behavioral and mental health needs of the students. The FY24 budget included an override and was constructed to continue to address the needs of students due to the pandemic and, at the same time, improve instruction and curriculum. The district continued to enhance its teaching and learning capacities through annual goals and professional development. Those goals help us to remain focused on working together to provide a high-quality educational experience for all students in a safe and caring environment. Several specific achievements were the Social Emotional Learning curriculum update, enhancements to the summer program to provide opportunities to learn skills that have been missed or underdeveloped, completion of an Equity Audit, and significant capital improvements.

SPS Vision

We are committed to excellence in educating students to be knowledgeable, creative, independent thinkers who are caring, collaborative members of the school and wider communities.

SPS Theory of Action

If SPS provides differentiated high-quality instruction that is aligned with the Massachusetts learning standards for every student, maintains a safe school environment, uses data to inform instruction, and supports educators through professional development, ongoing feedback, and enhanced leadership in curriculum and instruction, then our students will be challenged and their varied learning needs met, the capacity of educators will grow, and the existing achievement gaps will narrow.

SPS 2023-2024 Goals

District Goals

Wellness: Sudbury Public Schools promote the social, emotional, and physical wellness of students.

1. Enhance and maintain district-wide safety protocols: Develop anonymous reporting mechanism and Reunification Plans
2. Implementation of discipline referral system, review of behavioral charts and rubrics, training staff in de-escalation, and updated discipline processes
3. Review Mental Health referral protocols, goal writing and practices: 504 processes, implementation of risk assessment protocols, and review of district bolting protocols.
4. Execute, Update, and Revise SPS Capital Plan

Innovation: Sudbury Public Schools implement innovative, research-based curriculum and educational practices.

1. Review and revise scope and sequence for middle school science and identify supporting resources and engaging student learning experiences
2. Align mathematical course content with HQIM and course progressions and continue to focus on engaging and equitable mathematical experiences for students.
3. Implement and support through professional development SEL daily educational practices at the middle school.
4. Evaluate and implement recommended revisions for the Civic Action Project local showcase in grade 8.
5. Conduct professional development series from Keys to Literacy for ELA in K-5
6. Implement phonemic awareness curriculum using HQIM materials (Heggerty) in grades K and 1.
7. Complement phonics instruction with aligned decodable readers system (Geodes) in grades K-2 general education classrooms.
8. Implement best practices and updated HQIM for the learning and teaching of Ancient Cultures (gr. 7)
9. Expand Project Based Learning experiences, including a review of place-based learning opportunities
10. Initiate curriculum review process for world language
11. Expand payroll system functionality to include staff absence accruals and management.
12. Identify opportunities to promote and implement sustainability measures.

Meeting the Needs of ALL Students: Sudbury Public Schools provides equitable learning experiences to engage and challenge every student.

1. Continue to build a data culture: integrate ELA and Mathematics assessments with district review, reporting, and communication processes, PD on using data to analyze and evaluate student data through an equity lens to support instruction and curriculum, unit assessments for social studies K-5.
2. Develop an implementation plan for equitable grading practices at the middle school
3. Implement DIBELS, an early literacy screener, in grade 3.
4. Review and modify specialized programming for elementary students with learning and emotional needs.
5. Review process and protocols for entrance and exit criteria for specialized programs
6. Develop Tier 2 supports for Executive Functioning and math enrichment at the middle school.
7. Pilot curriculum/units on learning differences in elementary schools
8. Review and revise MTSS processes, including revising the DCAP and aligning IST processes
9. Plan for Early Childhood program expansion to promote equitable access.
10. Accelerate the district's ADA transition work.
11. Develop training and implementation process for new IEP revision

As we pursue our strategic goals and objectives we also, like other school systems in the Commonwealth, continue to be challenged to balance educational needs and our desire to be an innovative school system with our fiscal responsibilities. SPS has continued to maintain our strengths and strategically implement improvements through the hard work and dedicated service of our staff members and the unequalled support of a wide range of parent and community organizations. As a district, we continue to pursue structures that meet the needs of students while controlling personnel costs.

The General Fund budget including employee benefits for FY24 is \$53,634,959, which is 7.02% greater than the prior year (FY23) General Fund budget of \$50,118,315. In FY24, Sudbury Public Schools employs 477.11 full

time-equivalent employees (FTE's); this compares with 457.33 FTE's in FY23. Additionally, SPS received \$105,000 in competitive grants.

Our efforts to make improvements have been enhanced by the unwavering support of our parents, parent organizations (PTOs), as well as generous grants from Sudbury Education Resource Fund (SERF), and The Sudbury Foundation. These groups have contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to provide opportunities for our students and staff that the district's budget could not support. In some cases, core opportunities (e.g. enrichment and creative professional development) have been enhanced by local contributions. We appreciate these partnerships and the generous support of the work of our educators, which has allowed Sudbury Public Schools to continue to be a great place to learn and work.

In the space below, we offer a brief overview of our school district and invite you to visit our website at www.sudbury.k12.ma.us to learn more about SPS. On our website you will find detailed information about our school district including but not limited to individual schools, teaching and learning across the district, news and upcoming events, and the school district budget. For questions, please contact Superintendent Brad Crozier at 978-639-3211.

Student Enrollment

As of January 17, 2024, SPS enrollment in grades Pre-K to 8 was 2,581 students. This is an increase in enrollment from 2,580 students in the 2022-2023 school year and a decrease from our highest enrollment of 3,302 students in 2007.

Early Childhood Education

Preschool

The Sudbury Public Schools is home to an Integrated Preschool program at the Noyes School. Residents may apply as tuition preschool students on a "first-come/first-serve" basis beginning in the fall of each year. If interested in a preschool application, one may register from the district website or reach out to early_childhood@sudbury.k12.ma.us or call the Early Childhood Office at: (978) 639-3204.

Our preschool is committed to a developmentally appropriate philosophy that combines a play-based, language model that is enriched by a strong academic curriculum to align with the standards that are well established by the MA State Department of Early Education & Care (EEC) Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences. Our preschool team believes in educating the whole child by respecting individual needs for social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. This inclusive educational program allows all children to learn from each other while providing a lifelong foundation for respecting human differences.

The Sudbury Preschool Program prioritizes multiple learning modalities and methodologies. Each week, preschool classes attend an educational music class and a physical education/gross motor class. Social-emotional learning is the priority, while all classrooms teach literacy skills inclusively and naturally. Artistic development is deliberately planned with curriculum integration on thematic units, and science and math standards are incorporated with each unit of study. Outdoor learning opportunities are celebrated daily, as preschoolers play outside to practice social, gross motor, and language skills with peers. In addition, there is a lunch bunch/social skills group, and some students attend full-day programming.

Each class is staffed with a Masters's level teacher and two teacher assistants/tutors depending upon student needs. Speech and language, occupational, applied behavior analysis, and physical therapists interact with all classrooms. The professional staff includes a school psychologist, social worker, and guidance counselor, with regular consultation from a vision and mobility specialist. The preschool program regularly offers community “developmental screenings,” where families can meet with professionals to discuss their children's developmental milestones. The preschool team is highly experienced in both general and special education practices. This integrated early childhood program is an enriching learning environment for all students.

Kindergarten

The Sudbury Public Schools provides full-day kindergarten to all students free of charge. Kindergarten registration begins in February for children who turn age five on or before September 1st for enrollment for 2024-2025. Each year the district hosts a “Kickoff to K” evening event in January for parents and guardians to learn more about the Sudbury Kindergarten Program and ask questions. In the late spring, a ‘Kindergarten Orientation’ event is held, and this is when families and children are invited to visit their specific neighborhood school. The registration process begins with an online form accessible from the district’s “Registration” tab as of February 1st. Families will need to provide proof of residency for each child who enters the school system, even if there are older siblings who are currently enrolled. In addition, forms to address health concerns and parent information must be completed. If you have questions about the kindergarten program or your child’s readiness, please reach out to early_childhood@sudbury.k12.ma.us or call the Early Childhood Office at: (978) 639-3204.

Teaching and Learning/Curriculum

District curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Clearly communicating with families about students’ learning is a priority for the District. Resources supporting families’ understanding and engagement with the various curricular areas can be found at <http://www.sudbury.k12.ma.us/>, under the Teaching & Learning tab.

English Language Arts

ELA Curriculum Standards emphasize complex texts and writing about reading. This year, elementary teachers have engaged in a year-long study of evidence-based instructional practices with Keys to Literacy. A Steering Committee of educators and specialists has been guiding the district through the process of updating the ELA curriculum, including the adoption of a product that supports the recommendations of DESE and experts in the Science of Reading. At the middle school level, instructional units utilizing differentiated text sets provide for consistency of theme and topical study, while also allowing students to read in texts that provide the optimal level of challenge. A Response to Intervention (RTI) framework is in place at each of our schools. Periodic assessments measure students’ literacy development. Literacy support for students is provided using research-based methodologies.

History & Social Studies

The K-8 Social Studies program is designed to help students become informed in four main areas: geography, history, economics, and civics and government. The Massachusetts History and Social Science Standards define the “the primary purpose of a history and social science education is to prepare students to have the knowledge and skills to become thoughtful and active participants in a democratic society and a complex world.” Grade 8 students

participate in a Civics Action Project and travel to Washington D.C. for an extended exploration of national landmarks and government.

Mathematics

The Mathematics Curriculum Standards place emphasis on the mathematical practices and the development of a mathematical mindset that allows for flexibility, persistence, and application. Bridges in Mathematics, 2nd edition, is the core K-5 Mathematics program. DESMOS is the core grade 6-8 Mathematics program. The core middle school curriculum is supplemented in grade eight with Algebra I and Number Theory offerings and in grade seven with Mathematics Challenge and Support.

Science, Technology and Engineering [STE]

The Sudbury Public Schools Science and Engineering curriculum provides students in grades K-8 the valuable opportunity to investigate science and engineering with a hands-on, inquiry approach. The 2016 Science & Technology/Engineering Framework serves as a guide for student learning in science and engineering content and practices. The Science Curriculum Coordinator and Science Coach assist teachers with professional development, curriculum development, and coaching in the classroom. Middle school teachers are integrating the concept of phenomena into the science curriculum to help students develop a deep understanding of content and practices. Elementary school teachers structure their instruction using the 5E model (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate).

Digital Literacy and Computer Science

Massachusetts learning standards call for the integration of technology in all content areas as well as standards specific to the Computer Sciences and Digital Literacy.

Kindergarten and first grade students use devices for learning activities that support the content. Through repetition and established routines, students gain independence with the devices while learning to problem solve and navigate online. Students grade 2-8 participate in a 1:1 Chromebook program. These devices are used by students to produce work, collaborate with others, and support workflow. Google Classroom and Schoology, our online learning management systems, are used by students, educators, support staff, and parents to facilitate home/school communication. The district has invested in online subscriptions to support student learning.

Unified Arts

Art, Music, and World Language are critical components of Sudbury's Unified Arts curriculum in elementary and middle school grades. Spanish instruction is provided to all elementary students in grades 1 through 5. Middle school students elect either French or Spanish and proceed with their study of a world language in grades 6 through 8. Elementary band and chorus, as well as middle school band, orchestra, and chorus, are quality elective programs in our schools. Students participate in visual arts in grades 1 through 8.

Health and Wellness

The Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Health and Physical Education is designed to help students develop physical and health literacy, preparing them to navigate the complexities of our global society by applying health-promoting skills to a variety of situations. Students engage in comprehensive, developmentally and age-appropriate educational activities that encompass physical education, health education, and the development of social and emotional competencies. The success of the program relies on coordination among key stakeholders,

including school-based professionals such as teachers, mental health, administrators, nurses, and collaborations with families and community safety departments. This collective effort ensures a holistic approach to student well-being and enhances the effectiveness of the research-based best practices and evidence-based curricula implemented for students from PreK through eighth grade.

Student Assessment

As part of the Education Reform Act of 1993, the State Board of Education instituted a system of student assessments which culminates in a must-pass assessment in Grade 10 in order to graduate from high school. SPS students in grades 3-8 take MCAS in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Additionally students in grades 5 and 8 take MCAS in Science, Technology and Engineering.

English Learners are assessed each winter using the ACCESS assessment. This assessment measures student learning in the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Results are used to help families and educators understand students' current level of English language proficiency, and serves as one of the measures used to determine whether students are prepared to exit English language support programs.

State assessments are designed to help identify those students who need improvement in various subject areas and to provide information on those specific areas on which to focus curricular improvement efforts.

The Schools

The Education Reform Act of 1993 established School Councils at all schools in the Commonwealth. Each School Council is co-chaired by the building principal with membership that includes parents, teachers and community members. The Council assists the principal in identifying educational needs of the students, reviewing the annual school budget, and formulating a School Improvement Plan (SIP). The Council and the principal are responsible for the adoption of educational goals for the school and formulation of a plan to advance such goals and improve student performance.

Sudbury has a tradition that welcomes parent involvement in our schools. Parents are active supporters of many of our programs and countless activities within individual classrooms. Each of our schools has an active parent organization that provides a formal way for parents to be involved in Sudbury's schools.

As of 1/17/24

School	Grades Served	Enrollment	Administration
Ephraim Curtis Middle School	6 - 8	831	Jeff Mela, Principal Angela Menke, Assistant Principal Brian Menna, Assistant Principal
Josiah Haynes Elementary School	K - 5	395	Bryant Amitrano, Principal Lisa Williams, Assistant Principal
Israel Loring Elementary School	K - 5	425	Sara Harvey, Principal David Gaita, Assistant Principal
General John Nixon Elementary School	K - 5	334	Susan Woods, Principal Lisa Williams, Assistant Principal
Peter Noyes Elementary School	PK - 5	582	Annette Doyle, Principal Kristin Moffat, Assistant Principal

The Sudbury Education Resource Fund (SERF)

The Sudbury Education Resource Fund (SERF) is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization that awards education-related grants to the Sudbury K-12 public schools. SERF coordinates a bank of resources and expertise, providing grants for educational pursuits, curriculum support, student enrichment, and professional development. SERF has granted over \$246,618 to Sudbury's schools in the last five years alone. Membership in SERF is open to all individuals interested in contributing their time and energy. SERF continues to be an extremely valuable resource for enriching all aspects of the educational experience of students in Sudbury Public Schools. Further information regarding SERF can be found at: info@serfsudbury.org.

METCO Program

The Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) was created in 1966 by urban and suburban educational collaborators who believed that all children should have access to quality education in suburban school districts. In this program, Boston resident students receive placements in participating suburban districts, supported by state grant funding. The Sudbury K-8 system enrolled its first forty students in the METCO program on January 27, 1975 in the five Sudbury elementary schools. Currently, this grant-funded program supports up to 70 students annually. The 2019-2020 academic year marked the first time Sudbury Public Schools METCO Program enrolled kindergarteners due to a policy change by the Sudbury School Committee. Students completing grade 8, and any other student(s) leaving the Sudbury METCO Program, are replaced with the number of new students needed to maintain enrollment for the next academic year.

Leslie Smart is the METCO Director for SPS K-8. She began her tenure in September 2022. The METCO Program Coordinator for the Ephraim Curtis Middle School provides direct services to students from Boston during the school day and communication with parents and teachers, as well as being a liaison between the middle school students, faculty, staff, and families and the METCO Director.

Sudbury Public School students who reside in Boston participate in a variety of activities offered by Sudbury Public Schools. Sudbury METCO parent meetings are held in Boston several times per year; including an annual School Committee meeting. The meetings provide families from Boston an opportunity to discuss issues that are relevant to their children's academic progress and social-emotional well-being.

Special Education

The Sudbury Public Schools strives to offer the highest quality programming that will allow our students to participate in their neighborhood schools. Students' educational opportunities vary from full inclusion programs to specialized classrooms to support a host of learning needs and styles. Programming is available beginning at age 3 and ending at age 14 when students advance to Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School.

For the last several years, the district has focused on inclusionary practices that permit students with disabilities to have access to the general curriculum and school community. While the law states that all communities must place students in the least restrictive environment, the district recognizes the positive opportunities that result when students with disabilities participate in the general education classroom and when the curriculum has a universal design of learning for equitable access. All schools strive to establish inclusionary opportunities for students, and enriched educational experiences for all students are a priority.

The district continues to focus on the development of district-wide tiered systems of support to meet the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students. A tiered system of support is defined as a data-driven, prevention-based framework for improving learning outcomes for every student through a layered continuum of evidence-based practices and systems. The district created a district-wide team, including consulting experts, to examine data and identify areas of social, emotional, and behavioral needs impacting school safety or access to education. The systems of support are continuously being updated and adjusted.

The Sudbury Public Schools strive to be inclusive and child-centered environments where individual learning needs are met. The classroom is the best location for students to be nurtured in order to develop into able learners. The multiplicity of programs in the schools offers a spectrum of learning options and a continuum of service delivery in order to provide for the varied needs and learning styles of our special education students. The preschool program, at the Peter Noyes School, supports students with and without disabilities from age 3 until the transition to Kindergarten. Every elementary school hosts a learning center model with one or more specialized programs. Program strands at the elementary level continue to the middle school. Programs support students with significant learning or social and emotional challenges. The success of the programs can be attributed to the excellent teachers who continue to build their repertoire of skills. These programs allow more students to remain in their neighborhood schools, enhancing the Sudbury Public Schools for all students.

Professional Development

The Sudbury Public Schools support professional development as a key strategy for maintaining excellence in teaching. Two full-days for professional development workshops, in-service workshops throughout the year, ongoing support for conference attendance, and teacher leadership teams are some of the strategies used to grow the capacity of SPS educators. New teachers to Sudbury schools participate in a multi-day induction program customized to enhance their understanding of Sudbury's learning expectations and resources. Veteran teachers assume the role of mentors for newer teachers, forming professional relationships that benefit both new and veteran teachers. Sudbury educators are committed to attending a 30-hour course in IDEAS (Initiatives for Developing

Equity and Achievement for Students), a program that explores racial identity development and promotes international vision within our curriculum. Additionally, Sudbury teachers assigned an EL (English Learner) student continue to engage in a rigorous 3 credit program of studies in order to earn the SEI (Sheltered English Immersion) Endorsement required by the state.

The Sudbury Public Schools implemented an Improved Learning for All (ILAP) plan. ILAP is a professional growth model that utilizes early-release days approximately twice per month, enabling educators to attend carefully planned work sessions. ILAP days foster collaborative group activities within and across schools, grade levels, and disciplines to help accomplish district-wide and school goals.

Personnel

Retirees

The following SPS team members retired during the past year – Elizabeth Allen, Christine Flagg, Suzanne Foley, Robin Generoso, Rebecca Howard, Dawn Mosby, and Audrey Swennes. We were also saddened by the passing of Jeanmarie Skahan, classroom teacher at the Haynes school.

Years of Service Awards

On Opening Day in August of 2023 we had the honor and pleasure to acknowledge the following SPS team members: Kristin Moffat completed 20 years of service; Ann Duvall, Sara Harvey, Laurel MacKinnon and Elizabeth O'Connor completed their 10th year of service to the students and schools of Sudbury.

Respectfully submitted,
Brad J. Crozier, Superintendent

SUDBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Silvia Nersessian, Chairperson



Meredith Gerson, Vice Chairperson



Nicole Burnard



Mandy Sim



Sarah Troiano

