

CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01609

The School Committee will hold a virtual and/or in person meeting:

on: **Thursday, September 21, 2023**

at: 5:00 p.m. Executive Session

6:00 p.m. Regular Session

in: Esther Howland South Chamber, City Hall

virtual:

<https://worcesterschools.zoom.us/j/82746440670?pwd=dmp4TnIxYThBdnhkZWQ1bm1hMjFFZz09>

Also accessible by telephone, to dial in call: +1 301-715-8592 or +1 305-224-1968

ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. General Business Items taken in Executive Session

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares – Successor Contract Negotiations – Educational Association of Worcester, Aides to the Physically Handicapped, Monitors and Drivers Unit.

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel – Director of Special Education and Intervention Services Elect – Tammy Murray, Ed.D.

B. Call to Order

C. Pledge of Allegiance/National Anthem

D. Roll Call

E. Consent Agenda

i. Approval of Minutes

AOR 3-19

To consider approval of the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on August 17, 2023.

ii. Approval of Donations

iii. Notification of Personnel Records

iv. Initial Filing of Individual Recognitions

v. Notices of Interest to the District or to the Public

F. Item for Reconsiderationgb 3-210 O'Connell Novick

(August 30, 2023)

To commit as a body and as individuals to the state school committee code of ethics contained in policy BCA.

In accordance with Rule 21 of the Rules of the Worcester School Committee, I, Member Kamara, request reconsideration of item gb 3-210 because the intent of the request was not clear to me at the time of the September 7, 2023 vote.

G. Held Item**H. Recognition**

To recognize Jennifer and Michael Cormier: Founders and Coaches of Forest Grove Middle School softball program and Nicholas Chacharone: Founder and coach of Forest Grove Middle School baseball program.

I. Public Comment**J. Public Petition****K. Report of the Superintendent**ros 3-14 Administration

(September 21, 2023)

From Here, Anywhere... Together: Worcester Public Schools Priority Goals for School Year 2023-24

Rachel H. Monárrez, PhD

L. Reports of the Standing Committees**M. Student Advisory Committee Items****N. Approval of Grants and other Finance Items**

To consider approval of the Crossfit Foundation Equipment grant which provides funds to schools for the purchase equipment to support educator-led health initiatives at Sullivan Middle School in the amount of \$10,000.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$5,440.00 to The Stepping Stones Group, LLC, for April invoices that were just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$29,073.00 to the American Institutes for Research for May and June invoices that were just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$2,853.57 to Amplified IT for a March invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$4,102.50 to Applied Behavior Institute for a May invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$1,667.50 to Automated Building Systems for a June invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$1,000.00 to Custom Computer Specialists for a June invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$9,915.90 to the Evergreen Center for a June invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$5,394.00 to Harper Collins for a May invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$3,250.01 to the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium Rentals for a June invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$534.00 to Jeremiah Bianculli for a May invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$403.34 to Norel for a June invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$300.00 to the Ockers Company for a May invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$15,183.94 to the RFK Community Alliance for invoices that were just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$1,257.00 to Siemens for a June invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$16,410.46 to United Elevator for work completed in the last week of June and additional invoices that were just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$1,745.8 to Valley Green Shredding for a March invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$3,910.00 to Webster Square Medical for invoices that were just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$275.00 to Weld Power Generator for a June invoice that was just received.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$225.00 to the Worcester Educational Development Foundation, Inc. for an invoice that was just received.

O. General Businessgb 3-224 Administration

(September 14, 2023)

To vote to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Tammy Murray, Ed.D. for the position of Director of Special Education and Intervention Services for the period of September 25, 2023 through June 30, 2026.

gb 3-218 McCullough

(September 5, 2023)

To enhance nutrition/lunch options as possible to line up with dietary and cultural needs.

gb 3-219 McCullough

(September 5, 2023)

To receive an update on fund utilization for money WPS received to support Afghan refugees.

gb 3-220 McCullough

(September 5, 2023)

To review/update the policy regarding the process for students who have completed the program at New Citizen's Center and are moving on to another WPS school.

gb 3-222 O'Connell Novick

(September 13, 2023)

Request administration report on the implementation of the Workday system, including, as necessary, policy and budgetary implications.

gb 3-223 O'Connell Novick

(September 13, 2023)

Request administration report on the Information Technology systems implementation and needs, including, as necessary, policy and budgetary implications.

P. AnnouncementsStanding Committee Meeting Dates:

Governance and Employee Issues:

- September 26, 2023 at 4:15 p.m. in Room 410, Durkin Administration Building

Governance and Employee Issues:

- October 3, 2023 at 4:45 p.m. in Room 410, Durkin Administration Building

Teaching, Learning and Student Supports:

- October 10, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. in Room 410, Durkin Administration Building

Finance and Operations:

- October 24, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in Room 410, Durkin Administration Building

Q. Adjournment

The Worcester Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Educational Institution and does not discriminate regardless of race, color, ancestry, sex, gender, age, religion, national origin, gender identity or expression, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or a related condition, veteran status or homelessness. The Worcester Public Schools provides equal access to employment and the full range of general, occupational and vocational education programs. For more information relating to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, contact the Human Resource Manager, 20 Irving Street

L. Reports of the Standing Committees
Clerk
(September 21, 2023)

ITEM: AOR 3-19
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of August 17, 2023.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

Annex A (7 pages) contains the Minutes of the meeting held on August 17, 2023.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

File.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

File.

CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MA 01609

The School Committee held a meeting on August 17, 2023 in Esther Howland Chamber in City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. There were present: Vice Chair Johnson, Member Clancey, Member Mailman, Member O'Connell Novick, Mayor Petty, and virtually Member Kamara, Member McCullough.

Mayor Petty made a motion to recess and move into Executive Session.
On a roll call of 7-0, the motion was approved at 4:00 p.m.

At 5:07 p.m., The roll call to reconvene in open session was approved.

Approval of Donations

To consider approval of a \$2,500 donation to the Worcester Public Schools from Voya Services Company for being the recipient of the Donald J. Johnson Operational and Cost Efficiency Award by the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials for the successful results of the move to district-operated student transportation during the 2022-2023 school year.

Mayor Petty made a motion to approve.
On a roll call of 7-0, the Consent Agenda was approved.

gb 3-203 Administration
(August 9, 2023)

To announce all new administrators from the 2023-2024 school year.
The School Committee began the meeting with a presentation of new administrators from the 2023-24 school year.

Chief People Officer, Yeu Kue, read the names and positions of all the new administrative staff. She stated that she knew the administration had found the best people to fill these positions and thanked them for serving Worcester Public Schools.

On a voice vote the item was approved.

AOR 3-17 Clerk

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of June 1, 2023.

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of June 15, 2023.

On a voice vote, the item was approved.

gb 3-179.1 O'Connell Novick
(July 5, 2023)

To send in public comment supporting the Massachusetts draft health and physical education standards before August 28.

On a voice vote, the item was approved.

gb 3-185.1 O'Connell Novick
(July 12, 2023)

To consider the reorganization of the support staff assigned to the School Committee, to include establishment of a full-time Clerk of the School Committee whose sole responsibilities shall involve work directly related to the operation of the School Committee and the conduct of its business.

Member O'Connell Novick read the following additional recommendations sent to her from Chief People Officer, Yeu Kue:

- Rewording of the Qualifications section to say, "have a Bachelors or Masters or equivalent work experience"
- To the paragraph that begins with, "Specific knowledge-based competencies..", adding "and high levels of confidentiality" to the end.
- Adding a suggested salary

Dr. Kue confirmed these updates and made a recommendation of a salary range of \$100,000 to \$130,000. She added that the Administration did have a conversation with their legal team to ensure that they are following the correct procedure while remaining transparent. Dr. Monarrez suggested adding an executive session item to have their legal team come in to discuss the process. Mayor Petty emphasized that the job description will be posted following this meeting and there will be time to develop a process during the 3-4 weeks it is posted.

Mayor Petty made a motion to approve the amendments.
On a roll call of 7-0, the item was approved.

The following items were taken together:

c&p 3-8 Public Petition
(July 19, 2023)

To request the School Committee discuss the replacement of Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day effective the 2023-2024 school year.

gb 3-193 Kamara
(August 2, 2023)

To consider editing the WPS calendar on October 9th to read as Indigenous People's Day to correspond with local observance seen on the City's Human Rights Observances calendar.

Mayor Petty suggested sending these items to the Administration and getting a report from the City Administration on their policy regarding Indigenous People's Day.

On a voice vote both items were sent to Administration.

ros 3-12 Administration
(August 17, 2023)

From Here, Anywhere... Together: 2023-24 Superintendent
Preliminary Goals Rachel H. Monárrez, PhD

Member O'Connell Novick emphasized the importance of having a Strategic Plan before setting multi-year goals. She added that there is still a lot of work that needs to be done before a strategic plan is implemented. When speaking about the future, she recommended setting specific district goals that revolve around the fulfillment of the structural work done over the last year.

Member Kamara asked for more data to help get a clearer, more specific, picture of some of the topics presented and make it more reader friendly for people who are not in the education field. She asked for more specific information on how the district is working to support students who are struggling academically or emotionally as well as emphasized the importance of having educators who fully believe in the success of all students.

Member Clancey echoed Member O'Connell Novick's statement about the importance of having a Strategic Plan before making future goals. She added that she would like to see how the implementation of the programs created over the last year is affecting students and staff. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of setting students up for success and to be ready for life after they graduate from Worcester Public Schools.

Member Mailman asked how these goals fit into the Strategic Plan. She agreed with other members that the goals need to be multi-year and that the future outcomes will help determine next steps. She emphasized the importance of moving forward with these goals and not letting any distractions get in the way of their implementation. She reiterated Member O'Connell Novick's statement about the potential for federal assistance when it comes to Facilities and Maintenance of school buildings.

Member Johnson expressed gratitude for the work done by the Administration over the last year to help set a solid foundation for the years to come. He would like to see the implementation of these programs in this coming school year as well as the impact these programs will have on staff and students.

Mayor Petty made a motion to hold.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was held.

gb 3-189 Mailman

(July 31, 2023)

To explore the feasibility and logic of hiring our own school attorney to assist in the execution of building repairs and maintenance, contractual obligations and whatever other items will assist in school operations. Submitted as an acknowledgment of the reality of the very overburdened city law department.

Member Mailman explained that this item is an attempt to prevent delays caused by waiting for a response from the city law department and to give the School Committee more of

their own resources. Mayor Petty suggested getting a report from the City Manager and the City's Purchasing Department to get more information on what is preventing the city from being more resourceful to the School Committee. He also requested a report from the School Administration to get their input.

Mayor Petty made a motion to send this item to Finance and Operations with the amendment to receive reports from the School and City Administrations.

On a voice vote, the item was sent to Finance and Operations with the amendments.

gb 3-190 Administration

(July 17, 2023)

To consider the approval of contacting the City Legal Department for engaging in the process of applying for an H1B VISA for a Dual Language teacher for Chandler Magnet School.

Member O'Connell Novick asked if there had been any objections to the response given from DESE. The Administration responded that objections were filed.

Mayor Petty made a motion to approve.

On a roll call of 7-0, the motion was approved.

gb 3-191 O'Connell Novick

(August 1, 2023)

In light of the state's FY24 final budget, request the status of funding, including FY23 free cash, to restore solar panels eliminated from the Doherty Memorial High School building project.

Member O'Connell Novick explained that there is still the capacity to install solar panels at Doherty Memorial High School but it is no longer a part of the construction plan due to rising inflation costs during construction.

Mayor Petty made a motion to send to the City Administration.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

gb 3-192 O'Connell Novick

(August 1, 2023)

To consider the creation of a parent/family/guardian affinity group, parallel to those for special education and English learners, for family members of LGBTQIA+ students.

Member O'Connell Novick asked that this item be referred to Administration for them to gather more information for the Committee on the logistics of creating this group.

Mayor Petty made a motion to send this item to the Administration.

On a voice vote, the item was sent to the Administration.

gb 3-194 Kamara

(August 2, 2023)

To support the newly established program "Manager of Workforce Programs" with WPS Worcester Technical High School and other Chapter 74 vocational-technical and Innovation

Pathways Programs (IPP) by equipping students with the development of "Program Advisors".

Member Kamara made an amendment to her item to include all internships and co-opts in the district as well to help support students at the high school level. She asked that the "Program Advisors" would support students throughout their programs and/or internships and help guide them toward expectations for life outside of their education in the workforce.

Mayor Petty made a motion to send this item to the Administration.

On a voice vote, the item was sent to the Administration.

gb 3-195 Administration

(August 2 2023)

To review the status of the FY24 Budget and make appropriate transfers as required.

Mayor Petty made a motion to approve the item.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was approved.

gb 3-197 O'Connell Novick

(August 3, 2023)

To establish a policy that acknowledges the climate emergency in the priorities, policies, actions, and budgeting of the Worcester Public Schools.

Member O'Connell Novick made a motion to refer this item to the Administration to get their input on the best path for acknowledging the climate emergency our students and facilities are facing and will be dealing with in the future.

Mayor Petty made a motion to send this item to the Administration.

On a voice vote, the item was sent to the Administration.

gb 3-198 McCullough

(August 4, 2023)

To explore the utilization of student employees (age 16+) for Summer custodial needs and any other departments that could benefit from the additional seasonal help.

Member McCullough explained that this could be an opportunity for young adults to gain experience in these roles as well as any other department that could benefit from seasonal help but explained that the legality of creating these positions would need to be further explored. Member Kamara added that the positions available to students should focus on helping students get future ready experience and that they be paid positions.

Mayor Petty made a motion to send the item to Finance and Operations.

On a voice vote the item was sent to Finance and Operations.

gb 3-200 Administration

(August 7, 2023)

To authorize the Administration to write a letter of support on behalf of the Worcester School Committee for the district to pursue 15 electric school buses through the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean School Bus (CSB) Grant Program.

Member O'Connell Novick recommended School Committee members contact any

environmental groups they may be affiliated with to help send letters of support for this grant.

Mayor Petty made a motion to approve.
On a roll call of 7-0, the item was approved.

gb 3-201 O'Connell Novick
(August 9, 2023)

To update policies as noted.

Member O'Connell Novick read the following corrections:

- In the first policy, the word "compile" should actually state "comply"
- Any "his/he/she/hers" in the document should be changed to the singular "they/them"

Member Clancey noted that in policy CE, in the third paragraph, there is a line that repeats itself, "membership composition.." She also made a motion to approve this item as amended rather than send it to Governance and Employee Issues. Member Kamara expressed her desire to divide the workload when it comes to making policy updates. Mayor Petty explained that this item is from one member on the committee and they are making a recommendation to the committee for policy changes.

Mayor Petty made a motion to approve the item as amended.
On a roll call of 7-0, the item was approved.

gb 3-202 Administration
(August 9, 2023)

To consider a wage increase for CNAs and LPNs.

Member O'Connell Novick made a motion to have this item sent to Finance and Operations to have a conversation about the state of the field in regards to other schools and industries to get a better understanding of what those salaries look like. Member Kamara asked for clarification if this item is the same item sent to the Administration in January. Chief Academic Support Officer, Annie Azarloza, responded that back in January the Administration had decided to increase these salaries by \$5 in January and by an additional \$5 each in the fall, that is why it is being brought to the committee again now. Dr. Monarrez clarified that the committee has already approved this salary increase.

Mayor Petty made a motion to send this item to Finance and Operations.
On a voice vote, the item was sent to Finance and Operations.

Mayor Petty made a motion of suspension to go back to item gb 3-202.
On a roll call of 6-1 (No: Johnson), the suspension was approved.

Member Kamara asked for clarification on why this item is being sent to Finance and Operations. Mayor Petty explained that a report can be given in Finance and Operations to make sure the pay raise for these positions will put them in line with state regulations. It would also give the committee a chance to compare the pay rate to other districts to ensure it is a competitive pay rate. Member Kamara asked if the research provided for the position salary was done in January. Dr. Monarrez responded that the research was done in January. Chief Academic Support Officer, Annie Azarloza, added that in January this item was presented in a two part phase. Phase one was approved in January and this is phase two.

Member Kamra made a motion to approve the item.

Mayor Petty made a motion to reconsider the vote on gb 3-202.
On a roll call of 5-2 (No: O'Connell Novick, No: Petty), approved.

Member Kamara made a motion to approve the item.

Member O'Connell Novick stated that the information shared by the Administration in January regarding the pay scale of these positions could have changed in the last eight months. She added that the initial pay increase agreed upon in January may be out of date and could need to be even higher and for this reason it should be sent to Finance and Operations so more current information can be presented to the Committee.

Mayor Petty made a motion to send this item Finance and Operations.
On a roll call of 7-0, the item was sent to Finance and Operations.

Member O'Connell Novick asked the committee to approve an item to recognize the Belmont Street Community School for their "Exemplary Program--Central Region" award from Safe Routes to School which did not appear in the Consent Agenda due to a clerical error.

Mayor Petty made a motion to approve.
On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mayor Petty made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
On a voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

F. Items for Reconsideration
Kamara
(March 19, 2023)

S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

gb 3-210 O'Connell Novick
(August 30, 2023)

To commit as a body and as individuals to the state school committee code of ethics contained in policy BCA.

Recommendation of Maker: To vote to commit to fully fulfilling the policy

Recommendation of Administration: Approve on a roll call

PRIOR ACTION:

9-7-23 The School Committee approved the item On a roll call of 6-1
(No: Mailman), approved.

BACKUP:

Annex A (1 page) contains the updated cover sheet for gb 3-210.1.

Annex B (2 pages) contains the BCA - School Committee Member Code of Ethics.

Annex C (1 page) a signed document stating Member Kamara's reason for reconsideration of the item.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

To vote to commit to fully fulfilling the policy.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

O. General Business
O'Connell Novick
(August 30, 2023)

ITEM: gb 3-210.1
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

To commit as a body and as individuals to the state school committee code of ethics contained in policy BCA.

PRIOR ACTION:

9-7-23 The School Committee approved the item on a roll call of 6-1
(No: Mailman), approved.

BACKUP:

Annex A (2 pages) contains the BCA - School Committee Member Code of Ethics.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

To vote to commit to fully fulfilling the policy.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

File: BCA - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above:

1. Community responsibility
2. Responsibility to school administration
3. Relationships to fellow Committee members

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her community should:

1. realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children.
2. recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
4. be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
5. remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times.
6. accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her school administration should:

1. endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
2. recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
3. give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results.
4. refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:

1. recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
2. realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
3. uphold the intent of Executive Sessions and respect the privileged communications that exist in Executive Sessions.
4. not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Committee or from members of other Committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems
5. make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

LEGAL REF: Code of Ethics adopted by the Delegate Assembly of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, May 22, 1964.

Notice of Reconsideration:

In accordance with Rule 21 of the Rules of the Worcester School Committee, I request reconsideration of item:

Gb 3-210

To commit as a public body and as individuals to the state school committee code of ethics contained in policy BCA.

I request reconsideration because the intent of the request was not clear to me at the time of the September 7, 2023 vote.



Jermoh Kamara

School Committee Member



Administrator: Dr. Marie Morse
Department: Teaching and Learning
Date: May 23, 2023
Item: gb 3-144
To consider setting a date to recognize the Forest Grove Parents and Community for adding Softball and Baseball Programs to the school.

Recommendation: To set a date.

Rational:

Request to Recognize the following:

Jennifer and Michael Cormier, Founders and Coaches of Forest Grove Middle School softball program

Nicholas Chacharon, Founder and coach of Forest Grove Middle School baseball program

Over the past two years, Forest Grove Middle School has added softball and baseball to it after school offering for students. These opportunities would not have been possible without the tremendous time and effort of parents and community members who have each assumed all the work involved in organizing and coaching the teams. In the case of the baseball program this included personally paying for transportation to get students to their games as well as having umpires to officiate. We would like to recognize and celebrate their commitment to Forest Grove students.

N. Approval of Grants and Other Finance Items
Administration
(September 5, 2023)

MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

To consider approval of the Crossfit Foundation Equipment grant which provides funds to schools for the purchase equipment to support educator-led health initiatives at Sullivan Middle School in the amount of \$10,000.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

Annex A (3 pages) contains the Grant Acceptance Form.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Approve.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

Approve.

Grant Acceptance Form

Name of Grant: CrossFit Foundation Equipment Grant

Type of Funder: CrossFit Foundation

Awarded Amount: \$10,000

Grant Funding Period: Upon execution through June 30, 2024

Project Title: Sullivan Middle School Barbell

Program Coordinator: Tim Sippel/Aaron Champagne

Purpose: This grant provides funds to schools for the purchase equipment to support educator-led health initiatives.

Description of the program: The CrossFit Barbell Bandits is an after-school fitness and health program designed to get students active.

Program location: Sullivan Middle School

Outcomes and Measures: Students take part in instructor-led exercises designed to improve physical and mental health. Measures include surveys and workout program records.

Sullivan Middle School
CrossFit Foundation Equipment Grant Budget Summary

Expense	Amount
1. Administrator Salaries	
2. Instructional/Professional Staff Salaries	
3. Support Staff Salaries	
4. Stipends	
5. Fringe Benefits	
6. Contractual Services	
7. Supplies and Materials	\$10,000
Gym/Workout Equipment	
8. Travel	
9. Other Costs	
10. Indirect Costs	
11. Equipment	
Grand Total	\$10,000

K. Report of the Superintendent
Administration
(September 21, 2023)

ITEM: ros 3-14
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

From Here, Anywhere... Together: Worcester Public Schools Priority Goals for
School Year 2023-24

Rachel H. Monárrez, PhD

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

Annex A (6 pages) contains the Report of the Superintendent
Annex B (6 pages) contains two articles on the importance of representation
Annex C (10 pages) contains an article on reading on grade level for 3rd
graders
Annex D (11 pages) contains a copy of the presentation

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

To approve.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

To approve.



WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent
Rachel H. Monárrez, Ph.D.
Superintendent

P 508-799-3115
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E communications@worcesterschools.net

Dr. John E. Durkin
Administration Building
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609-2493

Date of Report:	September 21, 2023
Item Number:	ROS 3-14
Item:	From Here, Anywhere... Together: 2023-24 Superintendent Goals
Attachment:	Annex B contains a copy of two articles on the importance of representation Annex C contains a copy of an article on reading at grade level for 3rd graders Annex D contains a copy of the presentation
Recommendation:	Refer to the Standing Committee on Governance & Employee Issues

The School Committee is responsible for evaluating the Superintendent using the Massachusetts Model Evaluation and Indicator Rubric. The Model Evaluation includes a rubric that is designed around 21 indicators from the Standards of Effective Administrative Leadership (603 CMR 35.04). The Indicator Rubric outlines descriptions of a superintendent's practice for each indicator and articulates the specific responsibilities that a school committee may use to reasonably evaluate a superintendent. The Indicator Rubric has four Standards of Effective Administrative Leadership. The four standards are the following:

- Standard I:** Instructional Leadership: The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.
- Standard II:** Management and Operations: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.
- Standard III:** Family and Community Engagement: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.
- Standard IV:** Professional Culture: Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

The Superintendent is to be evaluated, minimally, on one indicator in each standard. A review of the June 2023 evaluation reveals a desire by the School Committee to see an increase in evidence aligned

with Standard 1. Additionally, feedback showed an overwhelming request to see evidence associated with a positive impact on student outcomes in areas including academics, wellness, and engagement. The proposed goals and evidence were drafted with this feedback in mind.

Additionally, as the WPS Strategic Plan is being revised this school year, the goals serve as bridge goals to broader strategic objectives that may be revised through the strategic plan development.

District Goal - 1

Rubric Alignment - Management & Operations: IIB HR Management & Development

By June 30, 2024, ensure a district-wide system for recruitment, hiring, and retention of a talented, culturally and linguistically competent workforce through a culture of belonging and authentic engagement as measured by a 10% narrowing of the gap between overall student and staff demographics.

Impact Evidence:

- Decrease daily staff absenteeism
- Decrease staff grievances at the school level
- Increase in BIPOC Staff

Product Evidence:

- WPS Staff Cultivation Guidebook
- System to track WPS retention rates
- System to track the language proficiency of our staff
- Partnership with an institution or outside community agency to help develop our staff into a more linguistically diverse community

Multi-Year Objective:

By June 30, 2026 build, honor, and sustain high-quality leadership across the district that supports authentication engagement and monitors continuous learning of teaching, learning, and a sense of belonging.

Rationale:

Research shows that student performance is tied to seeing “themselves” or representation in the educators, staff, and district leadership. Our current state shows that our staff demographics are not representative of our student demographics. In order to better reflect our student population, we need to increase the number of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) by 10%. This work is crucial. A 2018 report from Johns Hopkins University indicated that black students who had one black teacher were as much as 18% more likely than their peers to enroll in college. That number jumps up to 32% when there are two or more black teachers. This research is not only true for black students, but also for other

underrepresented groups as well. Currently, data shows that 1 in 5 Latino boys have been suspended before they even enter high school which leads to higher rates of dropping out which can have significant impacts on future access. In 2022, an article was released that supported the importance of representation. In reviewing 10 years of suspension data, it was found that consistently, not only Latino students, but all BIPOC students who were in classrooms with Latino educators were less likely to be suspended.

The data behind our language proficiencies across the district is self-reported, which creates a challenge in establishing a data-driven goal. Our first step to developing a more linguistically diverse staff across the district is to develop partnerships with local organizations to help test and certify our staff in other languages, create a class structure that allows for staff who may not be fluent in another language to develop fluency, and to encourage/support that growth.

District Goal - 2

Rubric Alignment - Management & Operations: IIA Environment & Family and Community Engagement: IIIC- Communication

By June 30, 2024, strengthen maintenance protocols and implement school safety recommendations to guarantee the continual modernization of all WPS facilities, cultivating an environment that is both secure and supportive of learning by building capacity and valuing knowledge as measured by 100% completion of highest priority, emergency projects identified through safety audit.

Impact Evidence:

- High-priority projects will be responded to within 72 hours by completion or with an action plan

Product Evidence:

- Create a system to collect & monitor completed safety trainings and drills
- Create a user-friendly status update system for work order submissions

Multi-Year Objective:

By June 30, 2026, develop and identify ongoing revenue streams for the WPS facilities master plan.

Rationale:

We conducted a safety audit of all schools last year examining the processes, practices, and systems within the district. Also, the Administration restructured the facilities department to better support school needs within the district. Through the Learning and Listening entry plan process, students, family, staff, and the School Committee expressed the importance of completing facilities and maintenance projects across the district. As we add more resources to support school maintenance, we endeavor to complete as many of these projects as possible, while also developing systems to track our progress and make it easier to report work that needs to be done. These accountability systems will improve our

ability to complete these projects in a more timely manner and if that is not possible to at least develop and communicate a plan for the work. We also recognize that there are funding limitations around larger repair and modernization projects to be completed. We are working on identifying resources to help with the completion of the work.

Student Goal

Rubric Alignment - Instructional Leadership: 1A Curriculum, IC Assessment, 1E Data-Informed Decision Making, & Family and Community Engagement: IIB Sharing Responsibility

By June 30, 2024, collaboratively lead school teams in identifying and using multiple sources of evidence to assess, respond, and improve outcomes in all schools with an intentional focus on historically underserved youth through building capacity and valuing knowledge, authentic engagement and a sense of belonging as measured by:

- Increasing the DESE accountability score for the schools at/below 5 by 4 percentile points
- Increasing the DESE accountability score for the schools between 6-10 by 5 percentile points
- Increasing the DESE accountability score for the schools between 11-20 by 6 percentile points

Impact Evidence:

- Increase grade 3 reading performance demonstrated by the STAR assessment by from the end of the school year 2022-23 to the end of the school year 2023-24
- Increase the percentage of students in grades 7-12 who self-report that they are engaged in school as measured by the WPS Culture and Climate Survey (Panorama)

Product Evidence:

- WPS Data Literacy Guidebook
- Multilingual Education Operating Manual

Multi-Year Objective:

By June 30, ensure all K-12 students have equitable opportunities to take ownership of their learning and engage in a variety of rigorous and relevant learning experiences to achieve their personalized goals.

Rationale:

Our district has been working hard to make sure all our schools have the support they need. We realized that to prepare our students for the future, we have to make some changes in how we do things. We believe that when school teams really understand how to use data and track their efforts, it helps students do better in school. Our Q-Teams will help schools with their academic and emotional needs. We will also make sure we have high-quality teaching materials (the new Core Knowledge Language Arts curriculum is one example), opportunities for teachers to learn and collaborate, and focus on a sense of belonging and engagement, especially at the secondary level in order to ensure students are college and career-ready.

We want to help all schools, but we plan to provide extra support to the ones that were identified by the state whose accountability percentile was below 20%. Some schools are doing well, however, others need more intentional support. Teams from schools and the district will work together to implement identified improvement strategies.

Another area of focus for us is on Grade 3 reading. Grade 3 has been identified as a milestone year for literacy as it is the year that students transition from learning how to read to reading to learn. Our end-of-year 2023 STAR data report shows that we have 28% of our 3rd-grade students reading on grade level. Reading levels for this grade have not improved since our full return from COVID-19. This flatline scenario in Worcester has also been reported as a national trend. We believe we can meet an improvement on the goal by the end of 2023-24 by providing high-quality reading instruction based on the Science of Reading, evidence-based professional development, systematic progress monitoring, and developing a culture of collaboration.

Professional Goal

Rubric Alignment - Professional Culture: IV-A Commitment to High Standards

By June 30, 2024 participation in the New Superintendent Induction Program (NSIP) year 2 will have been completed with all required projects submitted.

Product Evidence:

- WPS Strategic Plan with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and monitoring timelines



EDUCATION

Black students who have at least one black teacher are more likely to graduate

Johns Hopkins study looks at the lasting benefits of teacher race matching



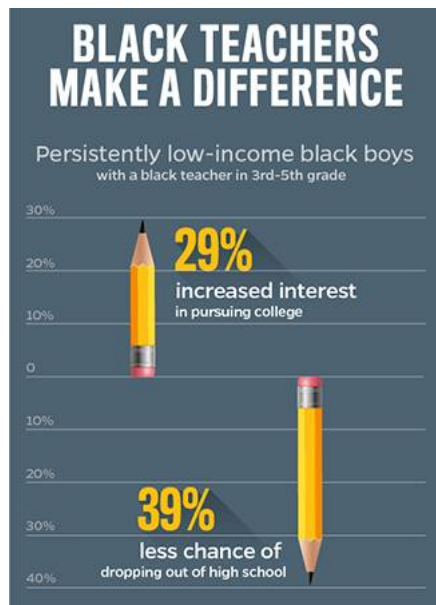
ISTOCK

Jill Rosen / ⌚ Apr 5, 2017

Low-income black students who have at least one black teacher in elementary school are significantly more likely to graduate from high school and consider attending college,

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according to a new study co-authored by a Johns Hopkins University economist.



Having at least one black teacher in third through fifth grades reduced a black student's probability of dropping out of school by 29 percent, the study found. For very low-income black boys, the results are even greater; their chance of dropping out fell 39 percent.

Previous research has shown there are short-term benefits to pairing students with teachers of the same race, but this study, a new working paper published by the Institute of Labor Economics, demonstrates the positive impacts of having just one of these teachers can continue over many years.

"Black students matched to black teachers have been shown to have higher test scores, but we wanted to know if these student-teacher racial matches had longer-lasting benefits. We found the answer is a resounding yes," said co-author Nicholas Papageorge, an assistant professor in JHU's Department of Economics. "We're seeing spending just one year with a teacher of the same race can move the dial on one of the most frustratingly persistent gaps in educational attainment—that of low-income black boys. It not only moves the dial, it moves the dial in a powerful way."

The researchers initially studied about 100,000 black students who entered third grade in North Carolina public schools between 2001 and 2005. About 13 percent of the students ended up dropping out of high school, while about half graduated, but with no plans to pursue college.

Low-income black students who were as good as randomly assigned to least one black teacher in third, fourth, or fifth grade, however, were not only less likely to drop out of school—they were also 18 percent more likely to express interest in college when they graduated. And persistently low-income black boys—those who got free or reduced-price lunches throughout primary school—who had at least one black teacher in third, fourth, or fifth grade were 29 percent more likely than their peers without a black teacher to say they were considering college.

Having more than one black teacher improved outcomes for these students, but not significantly more than having just one, the researchers found. About half the pool of students ended up having at least one black teacher in grades three to five.

The researchers replicated their findings by looking at black students in Tennessee who entered kindergarten in the late 1980s and participated in the Project STAR class-size reduction experiment. There they found that students who had at least one black teacher in kindergarten through grade three were 15 percent less likely to drop out. Having at least one black teacher in those grades also increased a student's chances of taking a college entrance exam by 10 percent.

This "race match effect" is sometimes called "the role model effect," a term that gets at why the researchers think a stint with a black teacher can be so lastingly beneficial for black students.

Papageorge calls it "a story about the power of expectations and the way people make investments in themselves." In a study published last year, Papageorge and co-authors found that race played a big part in how teachers judged a student's abilities. When a black teacher and a white teacher looked at the same black student, the white teacher was about 40 percent less likely to predict the student would finish high school.

"If having a teacher with high expectations for you matters in high school, imagine how much it matters in the third grade," Papageorge said. "Many of these kids can't imagine being an educated person, and perhaps that's because they've never seen one that looks like them. Then they get to spend a whole year with one. This one black teacher can change a student's entire future outlook."

Next the team would like to see if the benefits of teacher race matching last even longer, by looking at college completion rates and income data.

In the meantime, Papageorge hopes school policymakers consider how they could change a student's chance at success by getting him into a classroom with a teacher of the same race.

"This isn't a situation where students need two, three, or four black teachers to make a difference. This could be implementable tomorrow," he said. "You could literally go into a school right now and switch around the rosters so that every black child gets to face a black teacher."

Posted in Politics+Society


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Latino Teachers Matter. A New Study Reveals How Important They Really Are

By: Dr. Feliza I. Ortiz-Licon and Dr. Travis J. Bristol



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Con Ganas We Can Blog

This study adds to the growing body of research that shows the positive impact and outcomes that result when we have more Latino teachers in the classroom. Not only are Latino students able to thrive and stay connected to their education, but all students benefit.

DR. FELIZ ORTIZ-LICON
DR. TRAVIS J. BRISTOL

LATINOS
for **EDUCATION**

Latino students make up 27 percent of the K-12 student population nationwide, and in districts like New York and Los Angeles Unified, they make up 40 percent and 75 percent of all enrolled students, respectively. Given the historical significance and steady growth of the Latino student population, many would assume there is ample data and research on the importance of educator diversity and the impact of representation on the academic outcomes, school culture, and opportunities afforded to Latino students. Unfortunately that is not the case.

Until now, little research had been conducted on the quality of school culture experienced by Latino students and the effects of punitive discipline policies on this student population.

A recent study by Drs. Matthew Shirrell (George Washington University), Travis J. Bristol (University of California, Berkeley), and Tolani Britton (University of California, Berkeley), however, starts to shed light on this topic by looking at the ways in which matching

Latino educators with Latino students impacts disciplinary outcomes, specifically suspension rates. After all, the [research](#) shows that approximately one in five Latinx male students is suspended before they enter high school and school suspensions lead to lower student outcomes and a higher dropout rate. Therefore, it's important to examine what is driving these disproportionately high rates of suspensions for Latino students and how to prevent them from happening in the first place.

The study draws on 10 years of data on students and teachers in the largest urban school system in the United States, the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), to answer the following research question: Does student-teacher ethnoracial matching impact the likelihood or severity of exclusionary discipline for Latinx students in a large, diverse, urban school district?

The study reveals two important trends.

Representation Matters. Latinos for Education has made educator diversity a cornerstone of the organization's [Latino Action Agenda](#) because research affirms the positive outcomes of ethnoracial matching between educators of color and students of color. As demonstrated by [the study](#), Latino students are less likely to be suspended when they are taught by Latino teachers. If New York schools would have hired more Latino teachers during that 10 year period and matched them with Latino students then we might have seen 1,600 fewer suspensions for Latino students. This is an important data point considering that Latino students accounted for 40 percent of all suspensions during the 10-year period.

Latino teachers are good for all students. The longitudinal study also showed that suspension rates for Black students also decreased when they were matched with Latino teachers. While the impact for Black students is highest when matched with Black educators, it's important to note that educators of color overall are able to bring more nuanced and culturally informed approaches to their classroom, which informs whether or not they decide to recommend suspension or other punitive measures when teaching students of color.

The study also points to important interventions and actions that education leaders and policymakers can take if they are serious about improving student outcomes for Latino students. These recommendations include the following:

- 1. Latino teachers matter and schools districts across the country must do more to hire Latino teachers.** The disparity between Latino students and Latino teachers is significant considering that 27 percent of all students nationally are Latino, but only 9 percent of educators are Latino. This study adds to the growing body of research that shows the positive impact and outcomes that result when

- we have more Latino teachers in the classroom. Not only are Latino students able to thrive and stay connected to their education, but all students benefit.
2. Until we get more parity between Latino students and Latino educators, **school districts must invest in cultural competency training for all educators, including the largest share of the workforce, white teachers.** Equipping all educators, regardless of race or ethnicity, with the tools they need to be better allies, examine their own biases, suspend judgment and employ restorative justice practices in their classrooms will actually help all students, but especially students of color.
 3. **Collect and share more data.** School districts with significant enrollment of students of color need to do more to understand what opportunity gaps exist that might prevent these students from achieving their full potential, and that begins by collecting and being transparent about data. Funders and policymakers who care about education and student equity should invest in research that looks at what happens when these opportunity gaps exist and what are the best strategies to close the opportunity gaps that so many students of color face in our nation's education system.

Dr. Feliza I. Ortiz-Licon is the Chief Policy and Advocacy Officer at Latinos for Education where she leads the organization's policymaking and advocacy efforts to eliminate barriers to equitable, educational opportunities for Latino students. Prior to joining Latinos for Education, Feliza served as the Principal of Education Programs at UnidosUS; the largest civil rights & advocacy organization for Latinos in the United States. In 2015, she was appointed to the CA State Board of Education to serve and represent 6.2 million students. Feliza has deep expertise in leadership development, policy, program design, coalition-building, and fundraising.

Dr. Travis J. Bristol is an associate professor at the University of California, Berkeley's Graduate School of Education. Before joining Berkeley's faculty, he was a Peter Paul Assistant Professor at Boston University. Dr. Bristol's research is situated at the intersection of educational policy and teacher education. He is a former student and teacher in New York City public schools and teacher educator with the Boston Teacher Residency program. Dr. Bristol received his A.B. from Amherst College; an M.A. from Stanford University; and a Ph.D. from Teachers College, Columbia University.

** Drs. Matthew Shirrell (George Washington University) and Tolani Britton (University of California, Berkeley) contributed to this blog

EARLY WARNING!

Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters



A KIDS COUNT Special Report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation
SUMMARY

EARLY WARNING! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters

Summary of a KIDS COUNT Special Report

Millions of American children reach fourth grade without learning to read proficiently. The shortfall is especially pronounced among low-income children: Of the fourth-graders who took the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test in 2009, 83% of children from low-income families—and 85% of low-income students who attend high-poverty schools—failed to reach the “proficient” level in reading. Reading proficiently by the end of third grade is a crucial marker in a child’s educational development. Failure to read proficiently is linked to higher rates of school dropout, which suppresses individual earning potential as well as the nation’s competitiveness and general productivity.

Low state standards mask the extent of America’s low reading proficiency. Each state sets its own standard and uses its own test to measure proficiency. Children in many states may be nominally proficient but still lack the skills to actually read at the level required to learn efficiently in fourth grade and beyond.

Several factors contribute to low reading proficiency. At a minimum, children must be *ready* to succeed when they get to school (cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically) before they can learn there. They need to be *present* at school because they can’t learn if they aren’t there. And they need to have *high-quality learning opportunities*, beginning at birth and continuing in school and during out-of-school time, including summers, in order to sustain learning gains and not lose ground. For millions of American kids, these conditions are not met.

Getting more young children to read proficiently is no mission impossible. Much is already known about how people learn to read and how to impart reading skills, and many sterling programs already exist around the country. The problem is that policies and funding streams are too fragmented, programs too segmented by children’s age and grade, and key interventions too partial to get widespread, positive results.

This is the right time to take on the challenge of dramatically increasing the number of children, especially from low-income families, who read proficiently. With Congress considering the reauthorization of ESEA (No Child Left Behind), and the potential appointment of a Presidential Early Learning Council, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is tapping into the long history of broad bipartisan and cross-sector support for education reform with new initiatives and funding. The work of the Common Core State Standards Initiative, led by governors and chief state school officers through their respective national organizations, is raising expectations for what American children need to know and be able to do. Those resources and activities give us a powerful new chance to help children, parents, communities, and schools close the achievement gap while also raising the bar, ensuring equal opportunities to learn, and improving teaching and learning overall.

If current trends hold true, 6.6 million low-income children in the birth to age 8 group are at increased risk of failing to graduate from high school on time because they won't be able to meet NAEP's proficient reading level by the end of third grade.

TABLE 1

Percent of 4th graders scoring below proficient and below basic on NAEP reading test, by family income and race/ethnicity: 2009

RACE/ETHNICITY ¹	BELOW PROFICIENT			BELOW BASIC		
	ALL STUDENTS	LOW-INCOME STUDENTS ²	MODERATE- AND HIGH-INCOME STUDENTS	ALL STUDENTS	LOW-INCOME STUDENTS ²	MODERATE- AND HIGH-INCOME STUDENTS
Total	67	83	55	33	49	20
White	58	76	52	22	38	17
Black	84	89	74	52	58	38
Hispanic	83	87	72	51	56	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	51	70	43	20	35	14
American Indian	80	85	69	50	59	34

¹ Categories exclude Hispanic origin. Results are not shown for students whose race/ethnicity was unclassified.

² Family income is measured using students' eligibility for the National School Lunch Program, a federally assisted meal program, sometimes referred to as the free/reduced-price lunch program. Free or reduced-price lunches are offered to students with incomes below 185% of the poverty level.

SOURCE Annie E. Casey Foundation analysis of data from the NAEP Data Explorer, available at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>

FIGURE 1

NAEP scale equivalent scores for the state grade 4 reading standards for proficient performance, by state: 2007

STATE	SCORE	150	208 NAEP Basic	238 NAEP Proficient
Massachusetts	232			
Missouri	227			
South Carolina	223			
Minnesota	215			
Maine	214			
Vermont	214			
Connecticut	213			
Arkansas	213			
Hawaii	212			
Pennsylvania	211			
California	210			
Rhode Island	210			
New Hampshire	210			
New Mexico	210			
New York	209			
Florida	209			
Nevada	207			
Kentucky	205			
Wyoming	204			
Montana	203			
Washington	203			
Delaware	202			
New Jersey	201			
North Dakota	201			
Illinois	200			
Indiana	199			
Iowa	199			
Ohio	198			
Arizona	198			
Idaho	197			
Louisiana	193			
Wisconsin	193			
Kansas	192			
Virginia	191			
Texas ¹	188			
Colorado	187			
Oregon	186			
Maryland	186			
South Dakota	185			
Georgia	185			
Alaska	183			
North Carolina	183			
West Virginia	182			
Alabama	179			
Michigan	178			
Tennessee	175			
Oklahoma	172			
Mississippi	163			
District of Columbia	N.A.			
Nebraska	N.A.			
Utah	N.A.			

¹ Relative error greater than 0.5.

N.A. = State assessment data not available

SOURCE U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, Mapping State Proficiency Standards Onto NAEP Scales, 2005–2007

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1

Develop a coherent system of early care and education that aligns, integrates, and coordinates what happens from birth through third grade so children are ready to take on the learning tasks associated with fourth grade and beyond.

The system we envision would promote a widely shared focus on the target results of: **children born healthy; children healthy, thriving, and developing on track** (no untreated health conditions or avoidable developmental delays), from birth through third grade and beyond; **children developmentally ready** (cognitively, socially, physically, and emotionally) to succeed in school at the time of school entry; and **children prepared to succeed** in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

We are encouraged by the number of people, organizations, and advocates who recognize the interdependence among pieces of the continuum and who embrace the need to focus on results. We now need to apply that focus to aligning, sequencing, and coordinating collaborative work across the birth-to-third-grade spectrum with the goal of increasing reading proficiency by the end of third grade, within a context that takes full account of the social, emotional, and other non-cognitive factors that are essential to the healthy development of young children.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Encourage and enable parents, families, and caregivers to play their indispensable roles as co-producers of good outcomes for their children.

There is no substitute for the parent's or primary caregiver's role as a child's first teacher, best coach, and most concerned advocate. This role begins early and covers a lot of ground. Parents should: read to and converse with their very young children to instill the language and vocabulary skills that lead to proficient reading later on; cultivate a joy of learning and a desire for education—and then make sure their children show up for school every day; understand why it's important to read proficiently by the end of third grade and then proactively monitor their child's progress toward that goal; encourage their children to choose reading as a free-time activity; find and mobilize help from teachers, schools, education specialists, and/or medical professionals if the child struggles to read; find afterschool activities for their children that provide literacy enrichment and summer activities that protect against summer learning loss; and develop their own literacy and English language skills, if necessary, so they can help their children succeed in school.

Across the country, many organizations already are engaged in difficult and important efforts to promote successful parenting generally and parental support for early literacy and reading in particular. We acknowledge and applaud this work.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Prioritize, support, and invest in results-driven initiatives to transform low-performing schools into high-quality teaching and learning environments in which all children, including those from low-income families and high-poverty neighborhoods, are present, engaged, and educated to high standards.

Secretary Duncan has placed a priority on approaches that improve teaching practices, put the best teachers in schools where they're needed most, and turn around chronically low-performing schools. We applaud these steps and encourage ongoing efforts to align strong curricula, instruction, teachers, and assessments between early care and education and K–3 education. **The continuing challenge for all of us is to become more explicit, consistent, and insistent about the importance of achieving measurable results in the form of improved student outcomes and educator effectiveness.**

In the effort to develop higher, clearer, and more rigorous state standards for reading proficiency, the Common Core State Standards Initiative offers a promising alternative to nationally mandated standards. We applaud their work and remarkable progress made to date. We urge partners in the Common Core State Standards Initiative to accelerate efforts to link K–12 standards to standards for early care and education from birth through kindergarten entry.

To protect against additional unintended and perverse consequences of raising standards, we also need to commit to making sure that all children have access to the high-quality learning environments, resources, and supports needed for learning. We applaud those who are addressing this issue and urge more widespread attention to the critically important task of linking rigorous standards with equitable opportunities to learn.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Find, develop, and deploy practical and scalable solutions to two of the most significant contributors to the underachievement of children from low-income families—chronic absence from school and summer learning loss.

It is important for schools and school districts to develop interventions to catch and track absences, whether excused or not, and develop early warning systems and parent-centered interventions. Similarly, since the problem of summer learning loss is so prevalent, it is not unreasonable to expect curricula components designed to provide some accelerated refresher and review. Even so, it seems unrealistic to conclude that either of these two problems could be solved by schools alone. The newly formed Attendance Counts project urges a comprehensive community-wide effort to “nurture a culture and expectation of regular school attendance.”

The work of the National Summer Learning Association, and others, suggests that the solution to summer learning loss may lie not only in expanding access to language-rich summer learning opportunities, but also in more innovative and widespread deployment of technology. We may need to recruit schools, libraries, and community-based programs to help more children and their families combat summer learning loss.

A Call to Action

America's major education reforms of the past two decades have been both ambitious and, for the most part, bipartisan. At the 1989 Education Summit in Charlottesville, VA, President George H.W. Bush and the nation's governors reached a ground-breaking accord on six national education goals, produced by a panel chaired by then-Governor William J. Clinton. The goals, adopted in 1990, promised a generation of Americans that, by 2000, all children would start school ready to learn, the high school graduation rate would reach at least 90%, all students would demonstrate competency over challenging subject matter, U.S. students would be first in the world in math and science achievement, every school would provide an environment conducive to learning, and all adults would be literate and able to compete in a global economy.

AMERICA 2000, the strategy President Bush proposed in 1991 to carry out the education goals, called for “new world standards” for what students should know and be able to do and for schools that would produce “extraordinary gains in student learning.” In 1994, President Clinton’s Goals 2000: Education America Act codified in law the goals promoted by AMERICA 2000; added two more to improve teacher professional development and parent participation; and challenged “every community, every school, and every state to adopt national standards of excellence [and] to measure whether schools are meeting those standards.” And seven years later, passage of President George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act—legislation that Democratic Senator Edward Kennedy helped move through Congress—promised Americans that all students would become at least proficient in reading/language arts, be taught by highly qualified teachers, and graduate from high school.

Today, these promises, all made with broad bipartisan support, remain unrepealed—and mostly unkept. As a nation, we still owe our children a fair opportunity to graduate

from high school “ready for college, ready for a career, ready for life.” Similarly, we owe the nation’s workforce, employers, colleges and universities, and armed forces a larger pool of high school graduates prepared to take up the responsibilities of citizenship and adulthood. The alternative future is one with an enormous loss in individual potential and an unacceptable erosion of our nation’s competitiveness, readiness, and ideals. That is why we conclude this essay with a challenge to the nation’s educators and public officials—federal, state, and local alike: **Keep the promises already made.**

We resolve to do our part, as well. Joining with philanthropic partners in a dozen-plus states representing every region of the nation, we will support a decade-long campaign to move the needle on grade-level reading proficiency. The estimated 4.3 million children born in the United States in 2010, who will leave third grade in 2018–19, add clarity and moral urgency to this campaign. At least in these cooperating states, our 10-year goals are to (1) “close the gap” between the children of low-income rural and urban families and their higher-income counterparts; (2) increase by 50% the number and proportion of students who are grade-level proficient readers by the end of third grade; and (3) “raise the bar” so that these readers truly are proficient by the rigorous standards that will put them on track to graduate from high school and to compete with the rest of the world.

These goals, owned and pursued by a “big tent” coalition of parents, educators, advocates, ordinary citizens, public officials, and leaders in the faith, community, business, and military arenas, are within our reach.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Michael L. Eskew Chairman of the Board
Patrick T. McCarthy President and CEO
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Ralph R. Smith Executive Vice President

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation and KIDS COUNT

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private charitable organization dedicated to helping build better futures for disadvantaged children in the United States. It was established in 1948 by Jim Casey, one of the founders of UPS, and his siblings, who named the Foundation in honor of their mother. The primary mission of the Foundation is to foster public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. In pursuit of this goal, the Foundation makes grants that help states, cities, and communities fashion more innovative, cost-effective responses to these needs.

KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. By providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks of child well-being, KIDS COUNT seeks to enrich local, state, and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children. At the national level, the principal activities of the initiative are the publication of the annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book* and the maintenance of the KIDS COUNT Data Center, which use the best available data to measure the educational, social, economic, and physical well-being of children. The Foundation also funds a nationwide network of state-level KIDS COUNT projects that provide a more detailed, community-by-community picture of the condition of children.

Copies of the full *KIDS COUNT Special Report* (with citations and more data) can be viewed, downloaded, or ordered on the Internet at www.kidscount.org. Additionally, state- and community-level data about a wide range of factors that influence and are impacted by children's early reading proficiency can be found at the **KIDS COUNT Data Center**: datacenter.kidscount.org.

This summary is based on a *KIDS COUNT Special Report* that was researched and written by Leila Fiester in consultation with Ralph Smith, Executive Vice President of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Expert advice on content came from many people within and outside the Foundation, including Doug Nelson, Bruno Manno (now with the Walton Family Foundation), Cindy Guy, Laura Beavers and Florencia Gutierrez (who also provided data expertise), Tony Cipollone, Jessy Donaldson, Simran Noor, Mike Laracy, Lisa Kane, Lisa Klein, Hedy Chang, Ruby Takanishi, Fasaha Traylor, Ann Segal, Lisbeth Schorr, Frank Farrow, Jeanne Jehl, Lisa Roy, Marty Blank, Kati Haycock, Gina Adams, Terry Meersman, Charlie Bruner, Jane Quinn, Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Catherine Walsh, B.J. Walker, Diane Grigsby Jackson, Erica Okezie-Phillips, Susan Notkin, Gail Meister, Ron Haskins, Shelley Waters Boots, Ruth Mayden, Paula Dressel, Yolie Flores, and Sheila Byrd. Our colleagues at Casey Family Services also provided valuable information and insights, including Ray Torres, Joy Duva, Lauren Frey, Diane Kindler, and Eliot Brenner. Cheryl McAfee and Jan Goudreau tracked down countless research reports, often on a moment's notice. Connie Dykstra managed the production process with grace and patience, while Dana Vickers Shelley provided leadership on the communications side.

Permission to copy, disseminate, or otherwise use information from this report summary is granted as long as appropriate acknowledgment is given.

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Superintendent Goals 2023-24

Presented on **September 21, 2023**



Outlining the Standards

- **Standard I:** Instructional Leadership: The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.
- **Standard II:** Management and Operations: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing and scheduling.
- **Standard III:** Family & Community Engagement: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.
- **Standard IV:** Professional Culture: Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

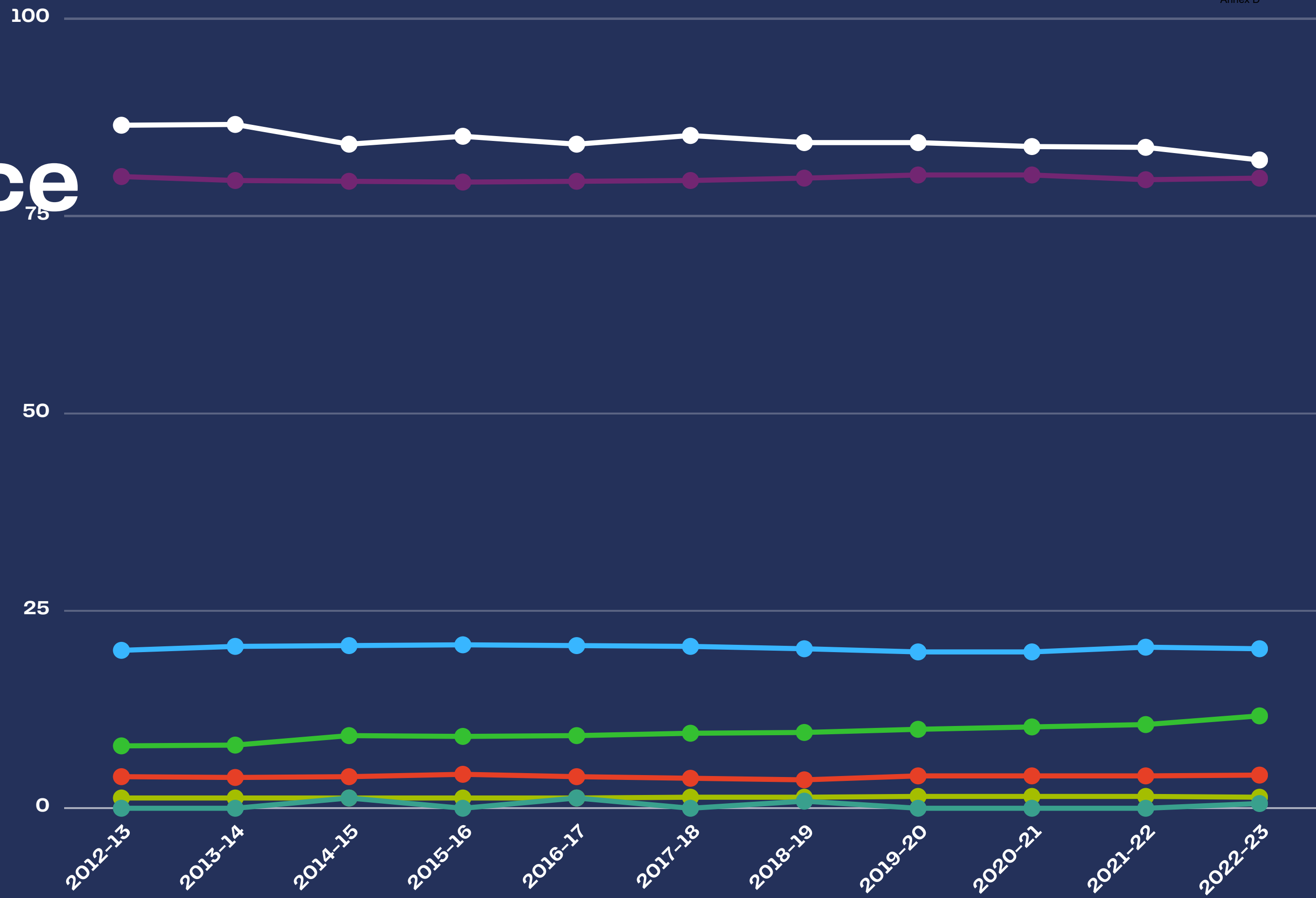
District Workforce Baseline

82%

White

28%

BIPOC



Worcester Public Schools | Report of the Superintendent 3-14

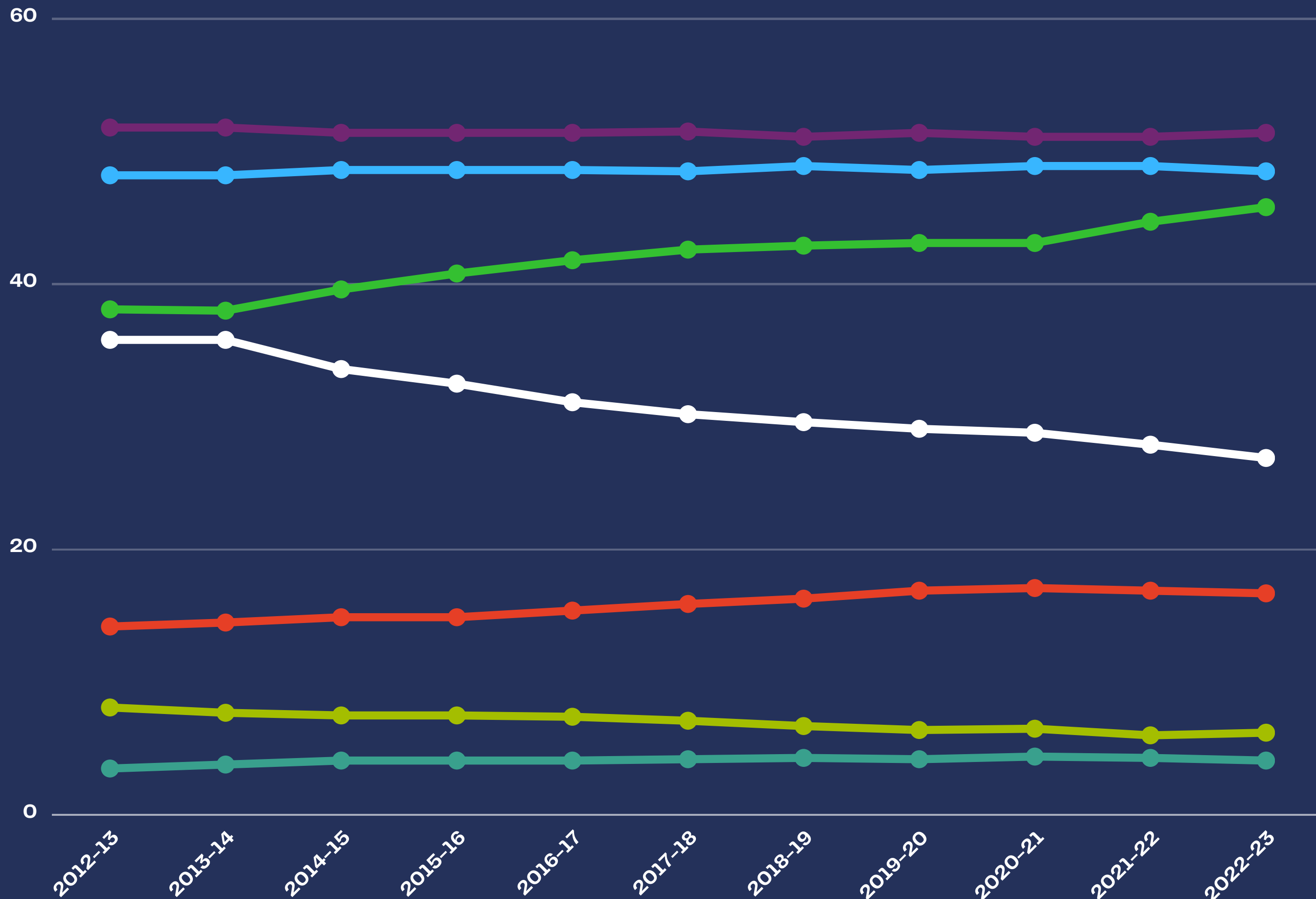
District Student Baseline

27%

White

73%

BIPOC



Worcester Public Schools | Report of the Superintendent 3-14

District Goal

By June 30, 2024, ensure a district-wide system for recruitment, hiring, and retention of a talented, culturally and linguistically competent workforce through a culture of belonging and authentic engagement as measured by a 10% narrowing of the gap between overall student and staff demographics.

Rubric Alignment

Management & Operations:

IIB HR Management & Development

Impact Evidence

- Decrease daily staff absenteeism
- Decrease staff grievances at the school level
- Increase in BIPOC Staff

Product Evidence

- WPS Staff Cultivation Guidebook
- System to track WPS retention rates
- System to track the language proficiency of our staff
- Partnership with an institution or outside community agency to help develop our staff into a more linguistically diverse community

Multi-Year Objectives

By June 30, 2026 build, honor and sustain high quality leadership across the district that supports authentication engagement and monitors continuous learning of teaching, learning and a sense of belonging.

District Goal

By June 30, 2024, strengthen maintenance protocols and implement school safety recommendations to guarantee the continual modernization of all WPS facilities, cultivating an environment that is both secure and supportive of learning by building capacity and valuing knowledge as measured by 100% completion of highest priority, emergency projects identified through safety audit.

Rubric Alignment

Management & Operations

IIA Environment

Family & Community Engagement:

IIIC- Communication

Impact Evidence

- High-priority projects will be responded to within 72 hours by completion or with an action plan

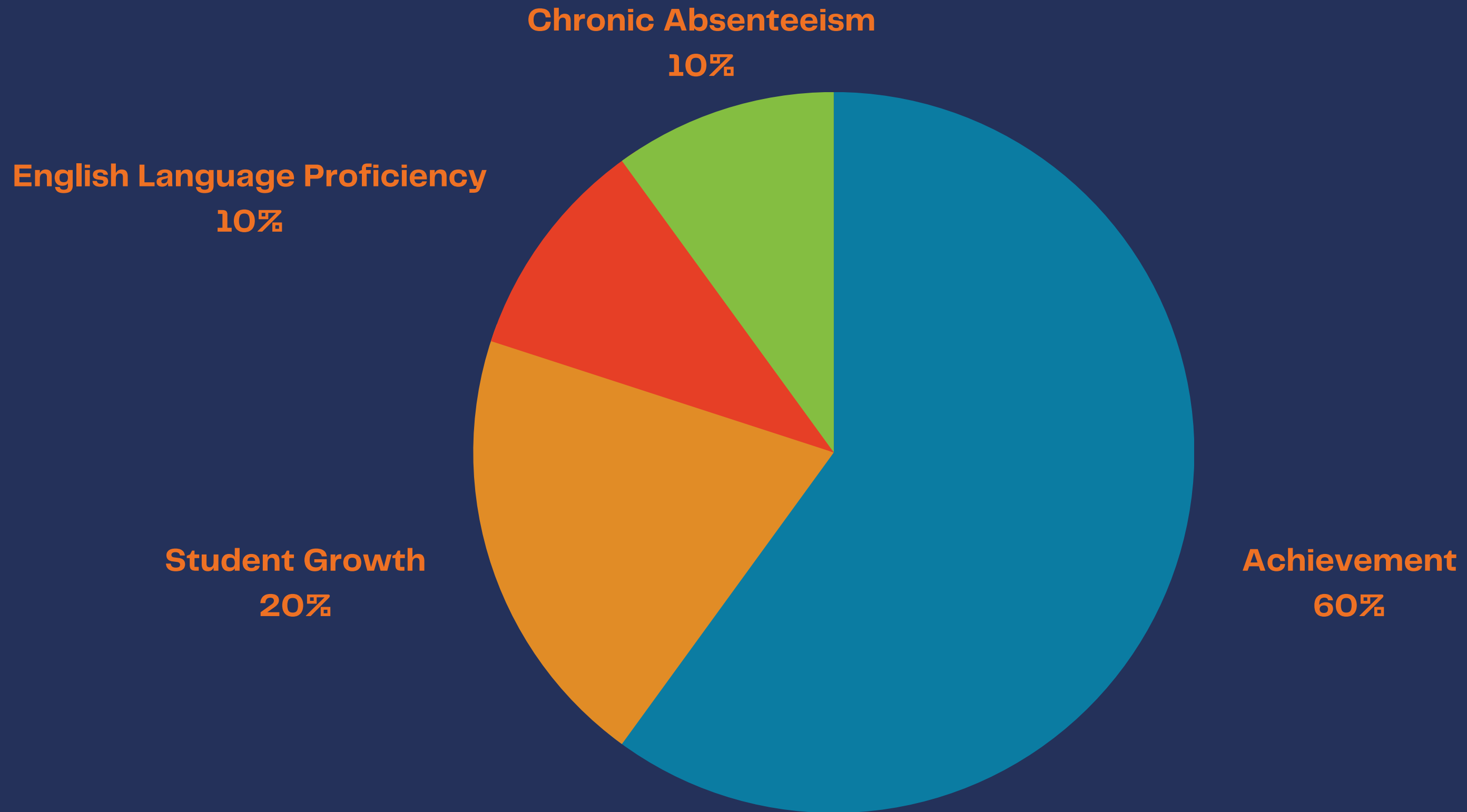
Product Evidence

- Create a system to collect & monitor completed safety trainings and drills
- Create a user-friendly status update system for work order submissions

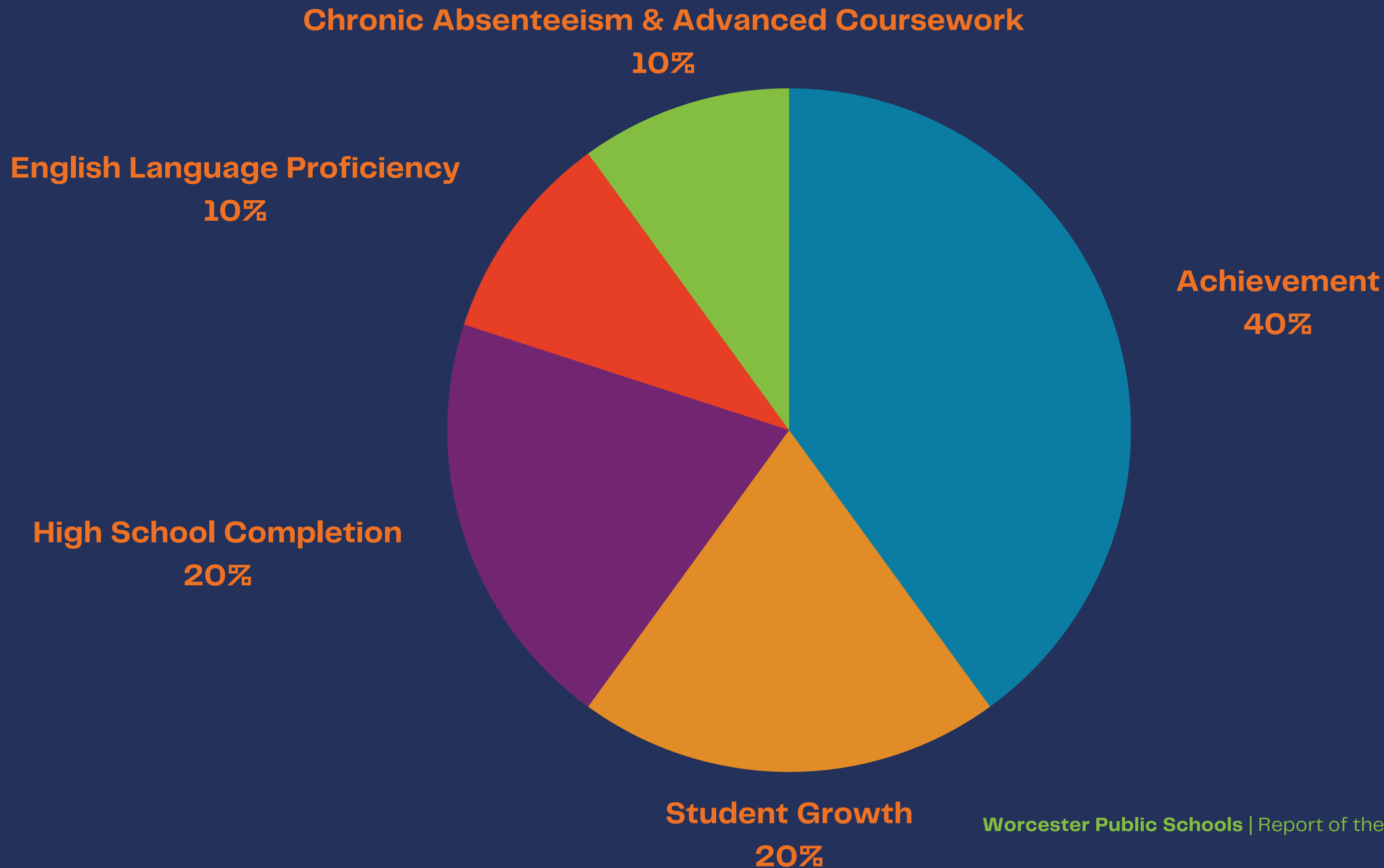
Multi-Year Objectives

By June 30, 2026, develop and identify on-going revenue stream for WPS facilities master plan.

DESE Non-High School Accountability System Indicators



DESE High School Accountability System Indicators



Student Goal

By June 30, 2024, collaboratively lead school teams in identifying and using multiple sources of evidence to assess, respond, and improve outcomes in all schools with an intentional focus on historically underserved youth through building capacity and valuing knowledge, authentic engagement and a sense of belonging as measured by:

- Increasing the DESE accountability score for the schools at/below 5 by 4 percentile points
- Increasing the DESE accountability score for the schools between 6–10 by 5 percentile points
- Increasing the DESE accountability score for the schools between 11–20 by 6 percentile points

Rubric Alignment

Instructional Leadership: 1A Curriculum, IC Assessment,

1E Data-Informed Decision Making

Family & Community Engagement: IIIB Sharing Responsibility

Impact Evidence

- Increase grade 3 reading performance demonstrated by the STAR assessment by from the end of the school year 2022–23 to the end of the school year 2023–24
- Increase the percentage of students in grades 7–12 who self-report that they are engaged in school as measured by the WPS Culture and Climate Survey (Panorama)

Product Evidence

- WPS Data Literacy Guidebook
- Multilingual Education Operating Manual

Multi-Year Objectives

By June 30, ensure all K–12 students have equitable opportunities to take ownership of their learning and engage in a variety of rigorous and relevant learning experiences to achieve their personalized goals.

Professional Goal

By June 30, 2024 participation in New Superintendent Induction Program (NSIP) year 2 will have been completed with all required projects submitted.

Rubric Alignment

Professional Culture:

IV-A Commitment to High Standards

Professional Culture:

IV-E Shared Vision

Impact

WPS Strategic Plan to include:

- Key Performance Indicators
- Monitoring timelines

- O. General Business
Administration
(September 14, 2023)

ITEM: gb 3-224
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

To vote to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Tammy Murray, Ed.D. for the position of Director of Special Education and Intervention Services for the period of September 25, 2023 through June 30, 2026.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

O. General Business
McCullough
(September 5, 2023)

ITEM: gb 3-218
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

To enhance nutrition/lunch options as possible to line up with dietary and cultural needs.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to Finance and Operations

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

O. General Business
McCullough
(September 5, 2023)

ITEM: gb 3-219
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

To receive an update on fund utilization for money WPS received to support Afghan refugees.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to Finance and Operations

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

O. General Business
McCullough
(September 5, 2023)

ITEM: gb 3-220
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

To review/update the policy regarding the process for students who have completed the program at NCC and are moving on to another WPS school.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to Teaching, Learning and Student Supports

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

O. General Business
O'Connell Novick
(September 13, 2023)

ITEM: gb 3-222
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

Request administration report on the implementation of the Workday system, including, as necessary, policy and budgetary implications.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to Finance and Operations

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:

O. General Business
O'Connell Novick
(September 13, 2023)

ITEM: gb 3-223
S.C. MEETING: 9-21-23

ITEM:

Request administration report on the Information Technology systems implementation and needs, including, as necessary, policy and budgetary implications.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to Finance and Operations

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION: