Westport Community Schools

Targeted District Review Report

January 2023

Contents

Executive Summary

In accordance with Massachusetts state law, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) contracted with the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) to conduct a targeted review of Westport Community Schools (hereafter, Westport) in January 2023. Data collection activities associated with the review focused on understanding how district systems, structures, and practices operate in support of district continuous improvement efforts. The review focused on three of the six standards (and related indicators) that DESE has identified as being important components of district effectiveness.[1]

Leadership and Governance

The Westport superintendent, Thomas Aubin, receives support from a leadership team consisting of the two principals and three assistant principals who represent Westport's four schools as well as district leaders, including the director of curriculum; the director of human resources; the director of technology; the director of facilities; two special education coordinators; and the business manager. The superintendent also works closely with the five school committee members. The committee and the superintendent communicate effectively with one another; however, school staff have fewer opportunities to provide input in the school committee decision-making process. Members of the district's business office articulated a clear and transparent budget process involving close collaboration with school and district leaders, as well as the school committee. Westport's *Strategic/District Improvement Plan* clearly delineates the district's strategic objectives and initiatives, including a thorough outline of action steps, a timeline, responsible person(s), and the desired outcomes and outputs for each initiative. Each school's improvement plan is updated annually by school leaders and local school councils, the latter of which are groups that exist at each school and include school staff as well as families.

Four observers, who focused primarily on instruction in the classroom, visited Westport during the week of January 24, 2023. The observers conducted 60 observations in a sample of classrooms across grade levels, focused on literacy, English language arts (ELA), and mathematics. The Teachstone Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) protocol, developed by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the University of Virginia,[2] guided all classroom observations in the district. These observations used the three grade-band levels of the CLASS protocols: K-3, Upper Elementary (4-5), and Secondary (6-12). Overall, for all grade bands, instructional observations suggest generally mixed evidence of emotional support, strong evidence of classroom organization, mixed evidence of student engagement (Grades 4-12), and on the low end of mixed evidence for rigorous instructional support.

Human Resources and Professional Development

Westport employs effective human resources policies, procedures, and practices. According to the 2022-2023 organizational chart, the Human Resources department is part of the Business Services

---

[1] DESE's District Standards and Indicators are at http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/district-review/district-standards-indicators.pdf.

[2] For more information on the Teachstone CLASS protocol, visit https://teachstone.com/class/.

department, which reports directly to the superintendent. The director of human resources is a member of the superintendent's leadership team, and the connection between the members of the leadership team—the Human Resources department, the superintendent, and leadership within the schools—is a strength of the district. Westport has a clearly defined process for hiring and recruiting new staff, and staffing decisions are based on student needs. However, despite meticulous hiring procedures, the district has not yet identified a reliable strategy to diversify its applicant pool and recruit and hire a diverse and inclusive workforce. In addition, perceptions of insufficient teacher staffing – particularly special education teachers to better support students with disabilities – are an area of growth in Westport, as is teacher retention.

Westport provides considerable professional development resources to school and district leaders as well as school staff. Westport teachers described multiple avenues for individualized and robust professional development opportunities, as well as a three-year mentoring and induction program that was described as a strength. In interviews, district leaders identified several mechanisms for teacher recognition and leadership development in the district. However, multiple teachers reported feeling dissatisfied with the limited opportunities for advancement because of their small district size and a desire for more opportunities.

Financial and Asset Management

Westport maintains clear and accurate budget documents that include information about all sources of funds and the allocation of resources. The district's budgets and relevant presentations from fiscal year 2019 to the present, including the proposed budget for fiscal year 2024, are publicly available on the district's website. Budget presentations and documents break down costs by specific category and school and explicitly make spending comparisons to previous years so that viewers can see change across time. District leaders reported that the district's business office, as led by the business manager and the executive assistant for business services, meets with the superintendent regularly to provide updates on current and forecasted spending. Business office leaders sit on the superintendent's leadership team, which meets bimonthly, and the business office presents updates on grant spending to the school committee on a quarterly basis. There is frequent communication between the business office and the superintendent regarding financial tracking and forecasting.

The district submits all capital improvement requests to the town's Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIPC), which consists of the town administrator, a member of the school committee, and other relevant stakeholders. The CIPC meets on an as-needed basis to review capital improvement requests and monitor ongoing projects. Several district leaders expressed that long-term capital improvement planning is sometimes challenging because of the CIPC's reticence to finance capital improvement requests, but they also recognized the construction of a new combined middle and high school as a successful capital improvement project.

Westport Community Schools: District Review Overview

Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, targeted district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. Reviews carefully consider the effectiveness of systemwide functions, referring to the six district standards used by DESE: Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, Human Resources and Professional Development, Student Support, and Financial and Asset Management. The Westport review focused on only the three governance-centered standards: Leadership and Governance, Human Resources and Professional Development, and Financial and Asset Management. Reviews identify systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. The design of the targeted review promotes district reflection on its own performance and potential next steps. In addition to providing information to each district reviewed, DESE uses review reports to identify resources and/or technical assistance to provide to the district.

Methodology

A district review team consisting of AIR staff members and subcontractors, with expertise in each district standard, reviews documentation and extant data prior to conducting an on-site visit. On-site data collection includes team members conducting interviews and focus group sessions with a wide range of stakeholders, including school committee members, teachers' association representatives, district and school leaders, teachers, students, and students' families. Virtual interviews and focus groups also are conducted as needed. Information about review activities and the site visit schedule is in Appendix A. Team members also observe classroom instruction and collect data using the CLASS protocol. The Districtwide Instructional Observation Report resulting from these classroom observations is in Appendix B.

Following the site visit, the team members code and analyze the data to develop a set of objective findings. The team lead and multiple quality assurance reviewers, including DESE staff, then review the initial draft of the report. DESE staff provides recommendations for the district, based on the findings of strengths and areas of growth identified, before AIR finalizes and submits the report to DESE. DESE previews and then sends the report to the district for factual review before publishing it on the DESE website. DESE also provides additional resources to support implementation of DESE's District Standards and Indicators, summarized in Appendix C.

Site Visit

The site visit to Westport was conducted during the week of January 23, 2023. The site visit included 13 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 25 stakeholders, including school committee members, district leaders, school staff, students, students' families, and teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted three teacher focus groups with six elementary school teachers, three middle school teachers, and two high school teachers plus two family focus groups. The team conducted one focus group with middle school students and one

focus group with high school students. The family focus groups consisted of one in-person focus group and one virtual focus group; the virtual focus group was open to all families who could attend.

The site team also conducted 60 observations of classroom instruction in four schools. Certified team members conducted instructional observations using the Teachstone CLASS protocol.

District Profile

Westport is led by Thomas Aubin, who was appointed superintendent in 2021, as well as a director of curriculum; the director of human resources; the director of technology; the director of facilities; two special education coordinators; and the business manager. The district is governed by a school committee composed of five members who are elected for three-year terms.

In the 2022-2023 school year, there were 115 teachers in the district, with 1446 students enrolled in the district's four schools. Table 1 provides an overview of student enrollment by school.

Table 1. Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment, 2022-2023

School	Type	Grades served	Enrollment
Alice A. Macomber Primary School	Elementary	PK-K	173
Westport Elementary School	Elementary	1-4	441
Westport Middle High School	Middle & High	5-8	832
Total			**1,446**

Note. Enrollment data as of October 1, 2022.

Between 2020 and 2023, overall student enrollment increased by 28 students. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from low-income families, and English learners [ELs] and former ELs) compared with the state are in Tables D1 and D2 in Appendix D. Appendix D also provides additional information about district enrollment, attendance, and expenditures.

The total in-district per-pupil expenditure was less than the median in-district per-pupil expenditure for K-12 districts of similar size in fiscal year 2021—$17,050.64 for Westport compared with $17,343 for similar districts and less than average state spending per pupil ($18,560). Actual net school spending was greater than what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table D4 in Appendix D.

School and Student Performance

In ELA in Grades 3-8, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS declined 17 percentage points, from 54 percent in 2019 to 37 percent in 2022, which is below the 2022 state rate of 41 percent. In Grade 10, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations declined by 6 percentage points, from 64 percent in 2019 to 58 percent in 2022, which is equal to the 2022 state rate of 58 percent (see Tables E1 and E2 in Appendix E).

- In Grades 3-8, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations was above the state rate by 1 to 5 percentage points for high needs students, students with disabilities, Hispanic/Latino students, and students from low-income households. The percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations was equal to the state rate for English learners (ELs) and former ELs and was below the state rate by 10 percentage points and 21 percentage points for White students and multi-race, non-Hispanic/Latino students, respectively.

- In Grade 10, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations was below the state rate by 9 to 20 percentage points for students with disabilities, students from low-income households, high needs students, and White students.

In mathematics in Grades 3-8, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS declined 14 percentage points, from 53 percent in 2019 to 39 percent in 2022, which is equal to the- 2022 state rate of 39 percent. In Grade 10, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations was 49 percent in both 2019 and 2022, which is below the 2022 state rate of 50 percent (see Tables E3 and E4 in Appendix E).

- In Grades 3-8, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations was above the state rate by 3 to 8 percentage points for high needs students, Hispanic/Latino students, and students from low-income households. The percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations was equal to the state rate for ELs and former ELs. The percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations was below the state rate by 1 percentage point and 7 percentage points for students with disabilities and White students, respectively, and below the state rate by 25 percentage points for Multi-race, non-Hispanic/Latino students.

- In Grade 10, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations was below the state rate by 15 percentage points for students with disabilities and by 3 to 10 percentage points for students from low-income households, high needs students, and White students.

In science in Grades 5 and 8, the percentage of students scoring Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS declined 4 percentage points, from 56 percent in 2019 to 52 percent in 2022, which is above the 2022 state rate of 42 percent. In Grade 10, 53 percent of all students scored Meeting Expectations or Exceeding Expectations in 2022, which is above the 2022 state rate of 47 percent (see Tables E5 and E6 in Appendix E).

- In Grades 5 and 8, the percentage of students scoring Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in science was above the state rate by 14 percentage points and 20 percentage points for high needs students and students from low-income households, respectively, and by 1 percentage point and 3 percentage points for White students and students with disabilities, respectively.

- In Grade 10, the percentage of students scoring Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in science was below the state rate by 1 to 6 percentage points for White students, students from low-income households, and high needs students and by 16 percentage points for students with disabilities.

The average student growth percentile (SGP) on the MCAS assessments in 2022 in Grades 3-8 was 48.3 in ELA and 48.2 in mathematics, which represent typical growth. In Grade 10, SGPs were typical in ELA (56.7) and mathematics (48.0).[3] (See Tables E7-E10 in Appendix E.)

- SGPs in Grades 3-8 in ELA and mathematics were typical for each student group with reportable data, ranging from 43.4 to 48.4 in ELA and from 41.0 to 47.9 in mathematics, except in ELA for Hispanic/Latino students, which was low (38.6).
- In Grade 10, ELA SGPs were typical for White students (57.0) and low for high needs students (39.2) and students from low-income households (39.4). In mathematics, SGPs were typical for White students (48.0), students from low-income households (41.1), and high needs students (43.6).

Westport's four-year cohort graduation rate for all students was 89.1 percent in 2020 and 89.3 percent in 2022. The five-year cohort graduation rate for all students declined 8.9 percentage points, from 95.9 percent in 2019 to 87.0 percent in 2021 (see Tables E16 and E17 in Appendix E).

- The four-year-cohort graduation rate was below the state rate in 2022 by 1.9 to 4.5 percentage points for students from low-income households, high needs students, and White students, and by 11.3 percentage points for students with disabilities.
- The five-year cohort graduation rate was below the state rate in 2021 by 20.6 percentage points for students with disabilities and by 6.2 to 11.3 percentage points for White students, students from low-income households, and high needs students.

The district's annual dropout rate increased from 1.4 percent in 2020 to 2.2 percent in 2022, which is slightly above the state rate of 2.1 percent (see Table E20 in Appendix E).

- The dropout rate in Westport was 0 percent for Asian students and Hispanic/Latino students and above the state rate for all other student groups with reportable data.

---

[3] Average SGP ranges: Very Low Growth = 1.0—29.9, Low Growth = 30.0—39.9, Typical Growth = 40.0—59.9, High Growth = 60.0 or higher.

Leadership and Governance

Westport is led by Superintendent Thomas Aubin, who was appointed in January 2021. He receives support from a leadership team consisting of school and district administrators, including both principals within Westport, three assistant principals, the Curriculum Director, the Human Resources Director, the Director of Technology, the Director of Facilities, the business manager, and two special education coordinators. The superintendent also works closely with the elected school committee members who represent Westport residents through their oversight of the district. The school committee has five members, including a chairperson and vice chairperson who lead the meetings.

According to the *Westport School Committee Policy Manual*, the primary responsibilities of the school committee are (a) policymaking, (b) evaluating the effectiveness of policies, (c) providing financial resources through adoption of a budget, (d) providing a direct means of keeping local citizenry informed about the schools, and (e) planning education initiatives and evaluating educators. To meet these responsibilities, the school committee hires and annually evaluates the performance of the superintendent. The committee also negotiates contracts with collective bargaining units and individuals employed by the schools. In addition, the committee presides over bimonthly meetings with district leaders and community members and records meeting notes in a publicly accessible place on the school's website.

The district's three-year Strategic/District Improvement Plan clearly outlines and tracks the district's strategic objectives and initiatives and provides a thorough outline of the related action steps, the timeline, responsible person(s), and the desired outcomes and outputs under each initiative. The principal of each school, in conjunction with a local school council, writes an annual school improvement plan that is based on initiatives outlined in the district improvement plan. The plan is then submitted for approval to the superintendent and is also reviewed by the school committee.

Table 2 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in leadership and governance.

Table 2. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Leadership and Governance Standard

Indicator	Strengths	Areas for growth
School committee governance	■ Strong communication exists between the school committee and the superintendent.	■ Opportunities for school staff to provide input in the school committee decision-making process
District and school leadership	■ District staff promote a culture of communication among the superintendent, district and school leaders, and the wider community.	■ Support structures and capacity for school administration and staff to focus on school improvement
District and school improvement planning	■ There is alignment between the district improvement plan and all school improvement plans.	■ Meaningful engagement of families and school staff in school and district improvement planning
Budget development	■ The district has a well-defined, clear, and transparent process for financial planning and budget development.	■ Using data, particularly disaggregated student data, to identify student needs and incorporate those needs into budget decisions

School Committee Governance

The school committee collaborates with district leaders to uphold Massachusetts laws and regulations, including overseeing the budget, making school policy, and maintaining their fiduciary responsibilities to the district and town of Westport. According to the school committee's website and interviews with the school committee and other district leaders, the primary roles of the school committee relate to setting policy and developing the budget. To perform the latter function, the school committee members work with district leaders to craft an initial budget and then engage with the town's finance committee to secure funding.

The school committee annually evaluates the superintendent's performance, using a rubric that assesses the superintendent's performance on standards aligned to the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework and his progress toward SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) goals that he creates at the beginning of the evaluation cycle. These SMART goals align with the objectives outlined in the Strategic/District Improvement Plan and with what district leaders and the school committee members identified in interviews as priorities for the district. For example, the 2021 superintendent evaluation included the goal of pursuing new revenue sources to support current initiatives. Participants in the school committee focus group echoed the importance of pursuing new revenue sources given budget limitations, with one committee member explaining: "We got to think of different things for . . . without thinking that we have a budget to support these great ideas." This committee member added that the superintendent does pursue other opportunities: "Our biggest comment is [that] we've got to reach out. And he does that." Regarding creating a culture of collaboration, school committee members and the superintendent described sharing a strong and collaborative relationship. The superintendent and other members of the leadership team consistently attend the biweekly school committee meetings to present updates on

district initiatives. A committee member explained that the superintendent and school committee may occasionally disagree about district policies "behind the scenes," but they put forward a "cohesive team" for the general public. The superintendent echoed this sentiment, as follows:

> We both understand that we care about kids, regardless of what way we think is best to get there. We have the ability to have very robust disagreements while still caring about one another. And I think that's an important thing for us to be teaching our kids, you know.

Both the school committee and the superintendent demonstrate a commitment to ongoing communication and collaboration on district policy, despite their occasional differences. This strong relationship is a clear strength for the district.

As evidenced by committee meeting minutes as well as focus groups with the school committee and teachers, the school committee invites student representatives to committee meetings to share announcements and provide input on policies and decision making, as appropriate. For example, the school committee mentioned that students successfully petitioned the committee to hold the 2022 senior graduation outside. However, both the school committee and teachers indicated that students have limited opportunities for voice in district policies. Students have participated in some committee meetings, but interviews indicated that their input is generally either limited to nonpolicy topics or, in some cases, disregarded.

The only stakeholder group to express contention or questions about the ongoing relationship between the school committee and schools was teachers, who consistently reported feeling left out of decision-making. For example, teachers across several focus groups expressed disapproval regarding the school committee's decision to remove summer reading unilaterally. Echoing this general frustration, one teacher referenced how school staff are rarely invited to attend school committee meetings on topics for which they have expertise or relevant perspectives. This person added that local community members present inaccurate information on these topics "and then you're not present as part of the agenda to defend or address it." This teacher added that these comments are "very offensive. And I've been here a long time, and it's getting progressively worse. It's frustrating because you will lose good teachers if they're not respected." This teacher suggested a connection between teachers' frustrations with a perceived lack of voice and staff turnover. On a related note, other teachers and a district administrator noted high rates of staff turnover.

The relationship between the school committee and teachers—which teachers characterized as strained—coincides with issues related to the school committee's inability to come to an agreement during collective bargaining. Interviews with district leaders, school committee members, and members of the teachers' association characterized the collective bargaining negotiations as an ongoing challenge. A member of the teachers' association shared that—at the time of the district review site visit—the district had recently been "out of contract for a year" because of disagreements regarding teacher pay. A perceived lack of communication and collaboration between the school committee and teachers is an area of growth for the district.

District and School Leadership

A team consisting of district-level administrators and school leaders regularly supports the superintendent in monitoring initiatives and supporting teaching and learning. In multiple interviews

with district leaders, members of the district's leadership team described the team as "inclusive" of all district stakeholders and includes multiple school and district administrators. The leadership team meets formally on a biweekly basis but communicates frequently via emails and informal meetings. All leadership team members interviewed reported that the team communicates regularly and generally agreed with one administrator's sentiment that they share a "pretty good working relationship."

An area of strength for the district is that the superintendent promotes a culture of communication among district personnel and with community stakeholders. The Strategic/District Improvement Plan includes an initiative focused on increasing communication with families by having monthly student-parent forums, weekly social media posts, and weekly teacher-parent emails. All parent participants in their focus groups reported receiving regular updates on district and school events, with one parent explicitly describing the communication as "very good." Supporting this statement, the superintendent's 2021 evaluation noted that he frequently updates both the school committee and district personnel about all major initiatives and changes in state laws or regulations, and he "communicates regularly" with community members and parents by, for example, instituting a "parental seminar" in which stakeholders can engage in open, two-way communication about district issues. The superintendent also reported hiring a registrar, part of whose role was to keep up with social media posts, which is another mode of communication.

With regard to school-level leadership, various stakeholders, including district leaders and teachers across several interviews and focus groups, agreed that the district lacks enough leaders at the school level to oversee school staff. Currently, only two principals service the district's four schools, which led teachers, particularly in the lower and upper elementary schools, to report that administrators are "not available to us." Likewise, several district leaders reported that schools' lack of additional leadership positions, such as department heads and school-level special education coordinators, further limits the capacity of district and school leaders to focus on improving teaching and learning. For example, one district leader explained as follows:

> I feel like we could accelerate improvement if we had a humanities coordinator and a STEAM [science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics] coordinator that I could work with to get into the schools more. . . . And I think the special ed coordinators . . . they don't have team chairs, so they have to run the department and they have to do all the meetings, and that limits their ability to get into classrooms and work with me, for example, to figure out, okay, how can we develop a more effective teaching model.

Because of limited staffing at the leadership level and related issues, strengthening the capacity of school leaders and teachers to focus on improvement is an area of growth for the district. However, interview data also suggest that doing so may require additional staffing, which often require budget decisions that district personnel have limited control over. (The budget sections explain this in more detail.)

Finally, teachers and school leaders expressed varied opinions on whether the district afforded sufficient autonomy to either group to support school improvement plans and improve student outcomes. All school leader focus group participants reported that they have "significant autonomy"

when it comes to staffing and scheduling; however, they also noted that the district had a limited budget that restricted their ability to fund school initiatives, which indirectly limits decision making.

Regarding leadership development, teachers in two focus groups spoke positively about initiatives intended to increase the autonomy of teachers, such as the formation of professional learning committees and curriculum steering committees. However, two teacher focus groups shared that these opportunities do not necessarily lead to genuine decision making. This was supported through multiple interviews where teachers and school leaders were not in congruence with specific curricula decisions. For example, teachers in one focus group shared how curriculum decisions at the district level did not reflect the opinions of the teachers at their school, with one teacher providing information on the district replacing the Lexia literacy curriculum with another program, despite teacher support for Lexia. Although it was confirmed through interviews of school leaders that the program was still in place, a teacher stated:

> There was a Lexia program, but because we got Wonders, it [Lexia] was taken away. And I would have said, wait a minute, I like that program. So there are certain things that I think they don't always come to us for, but that we use in our daily curriculum. So that's frustrating to me. That's one little example of how they just don't understand . . . or not—maybe it's understanding or maybe it's just . . . the money and they [district leadership] don't really care.

In this case, teachers explained that a committee selected new curricula, and some teachers piloted these new programs, but there were some instances in which no teachers at their school were part of the pilots. These teachers were unclear about how decisions to choose new curricula were made and were also unaware of which curriculum would still be implemented in the district. Teachers across multiple focus groups expressed similar frustration at feeling unheard or not being consulted on district decision making about several issues, such as the curriculum, hiring, and scheduling. District leaders characterized the process for choosing new curricula as both rigorous and ongoing, and a priority aimed at improving equity is horizontal alignment and consistency within class levels. Paralleling the findings in the school committee section, improving relationships with teachers—including communication about decision making—is a possible area of growth for the district.

As the superintendent promotes a culture of collaboration, trust, accountability, and joint responsibility for student learning among all district staff members and demonstrates instructional leadership by focusing on improving teacher practice and student learning outcomes, the district review examined classroom instruction through instructional observations of all four district schools. Four observers, who focused primarily on instruction in the classroom, visited Westport during the week of January 23, 2023. The observers conducted 60 observations in a sample of classrooms across grade levels, focused on literacy, ELA, and mathematics. The CLASS protocol guided all classroom observations in the district. These observations used the three grade-band levels of CLASS protocols: K-3, Upper Elementary (4-5), and Secondary (6-12).

The K-3 protocol includes 10 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The Upper Elementary and Secondary protocols include 11 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support, in addition to Student Engagement. The three domains observed at all levels broadly are defined as follows:

- **Emotional Support.** Describes the social-emotional functioning of the classroom, including teacher-student relationships and responsiveness to social-emotional needs.
- **Classroom Organization.** Describes the management of students' behavior, time, and attention in the classroom.
- **Instructional Support.** Describes the efforts to support cognitive and language development, including cognitive demand of the assigned tasks, the focus on higher order thinking skills, and the use of process-oriented feedback.

When conducting a classroom visit, the observer rates each dimension (including Student Engagement) on a scale of 1 to 7. A rating of 1 or 2 (low range) indicates that the dimension was never or rarely evident during the visit. A rating of 3, 4, or 5 (middle range) indicates that the dimension was evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. A rating of 6 or 7 (high range) indicates that the dimension was reflected in all or most classroom activities and in a way that included all or most students.

In Westport, ratings are provided across three grade bands: K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. For each grade band, ratings are provided across the overarching domains, as well as at individual dimensions within those domains. The full report of findings from observations conducted in Westport is in Appendix B, and summary results are in Tables 17, 18, and 19 in this appendix.

In summary, findings from the Westport observations were as follows:

- **Emotional Support.** Ratings were in the middle range for all grade bands (5.2 for K-5, 3.8 for 6-8, and 5.0 for 9-12, respectively)
- **Classroom Organization.** Ratings were in the high range for all grade bands (6.0 for K-5, 6.9 for 6-8, and 6.6 for 9-12).
- **Instructional Support.** Ratings were in the middle range for all grade bands (3.2 for K-5, 3.1 for 6-8, and 4.1 for 9-12).
- **Student Engagement.** For grades 4 and up, where student engagement was measured as an independent domain, ratings were in the middle range for all measured grade bands (5.1 for 4-5, 4.4 for 6-8, and 5.0 for 9-12).

Overall, across all grade bands, instructional observations suggest generally mixed evidence for emotional support, instructional support, and student engagement (Grades 4-12), as well as evidence of strong classroom organization.

District and School Improvement Planning

Westport's *Strategic/District Improvement Plan* clearly delineates the district's strategic objectives and initiatives, including a thorough outline of action steps, a timeline, responsible person(s), and the desired outcomes and outputs for each initiative. Each school's improvement plan is updated annually by school leaders and local school councils, the latter of which are groups at each school and include school staff as well as families. This collaborative process occurs in consultation with the superintendent and illustrates alignment between the district's goals and initiatives and those of the individual schools. School committee presentations, district and school leader evaluations, and

interviews with district leaders and teachers provide further evidence of an alignment of district and school priorities, a clear strength for the district. However, interviews with teachers suggest that not all stakeholders are meaningfully engaged, represented, and updated on improvement planning.

District and school leaders reported that the 2020-2023 *Strategic/District Improvement Plan* was developed primarily by the previous superintendent in consultation with the school committee and the district leadership team. School leaders reported that they develop school-level improvement plans that the district "combine . . . through the whole year." A review of documents also showed that the district improvement plan is closely aligned with school improvement plans, with very similar wording, in some cases minimally different. The extent to which school councils are meaningfully engaged in the development of school plans was unclear; teachers in one focus group suggested that the school councils serve a more passive role in school improvement planning: "Principals usually do it [write the plan], and then they just pass it on." Teachers in another focus group indicated feeling that school staff and the teachers' association were rarely consulted in improvement planning. Finally, only one district stakeholder shared that the district engages parents and community members in planning while also noting the challenges of engaging said stakeholders: "I mean, we bring everybody together and that means the community, you know, and, you know, that can be challenging, to be honest with you, because again, everybody has their own belief of what a school should look like."

Meaningful engagement of school staff and other stakeholders in improvement planning is an area of growth for the district. Still, there is some indication that the district is trying to engage parents in improvement planning going forward; for example, as of 2023, the district website includes a link to an online survey that asks families to evaluate the extent to which they believe that all students, regardless of race, gender, disability, or other identity, are provided with equal access to programs and activities. Although the questionnaire is not in depth, it did solicit some key information from families.

According to interview data, monitoring of improvement plans occurs bimonthly. Regarding the extent to which all stakeholders understand and are updated on progress toward district and school initiatives, various stakeholders, including district leaders and teachers, generally indicated awareness of what some of the ongoing priorities were for the district. These priorities include the development of a horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment system; improved family and community partnerships to support the social-emotional development of students; and the pursuit of new revenue sources to support current and future initiatives. One district leader reported that these strategic initiatives are embedded in specific professional development sessions, with teachers similarly referencing attending professional development sessions on social-emotional learning and aligning curriculum. Likewise, school improvement goals reflect specific goals and action steps outlined in the district strategic plan, which is further evidence of alignment.

Teachers across several focus groups reported receiving updates on progress toward plan goals during professional development sessions and in weekly staff meetings. School and district leaders similarly reported receiving updates on district progress, which included monitoring progress toward improvement goals, during their bimonthly leadership team meetings with the superintendent. Finally, according to the *School Committee Policy Manual*, the superintendent provides planning

updates to the entire Westport community through a yearly report that summarizes district activities and progress toward the district's strategic initiatives.

Budget Development

Members of the district's business office articulated a clear and transparent budget process that involves close collaboration with school and district leaders and the school committee. District leaders described a cyclical and iterative budget development process beginning in September-October, in which the business manager and the executive assistant of business services begin planning in consultation with the superintendent, school leaders, and district department heads. During this period, initial revenue and expenses are estimated for each school, along with initial enrollment projections. By the end of November, the school committee reviews the district's budget during budget work sessions. Minutes from these budget sessions show that this is a collaborative process involving the superintendent and the department heads. The fiscal year 2024 proposed budget, along with all previous years' line-item budgets, are publicly available and accessible on the district website, as well as all budget working session meeting minutes and related presentations. This transparency in the budget development process is a strength for the district.

Once the school committee approves a final budget in February, district leaders present the budget to the town's finance committee. Based on the proposed budget, the town allots money to the district that usually is less than what the proposed budget requests. From there, the district negotiates with the town, with one administrator explaining as follows:

> We get an amount approved on what the school committee would like us to move forward with, [which] is always different from what [the] finance committee, town administrator, and Board of Selectmen's [budget allotment] is. But we do that and then we work closely with them to see what is fair, where we can meet somewhere in the middle.

However, as the school committee, multiple district stakeholders, and teacher focus groups noted, this budget negotiation can be challenging because of the finance committee and the town's historical unwillingness to provide funding to the district that is adequate to meet student needs.

Finally, the budget development process culminates in a public meeting in April-May, during which the public has input on the final budget. As both the school committee and superintendent have pointed out, the district can use this public meeting as an opportunity to advocate for and secure additional funding. District staff, including leaders and teachers, have expressed that the town provides limited financial resources to the district. Further, district leaders indicated a hesitancy with organizing district staff to advocate for additional funds – for example, during override votes, which the town routinely votes down – because they recognize that the town's decisions to limit tax revenue mean that apportioning more to the school would affect other town departments.

Virtually all stakeholders reported that with limited resources provided by the town, the district struggles with an inadequate budget that limits district and school leaders' discretion over spending decisions. District leaders also reported another budget constraint: staffing takes up a significant portion of the budget every year. School committee meeting minutes show that 85 percent of the fiscal year 2024's proposal budget consists of personnel costs. As one administrator explained,

That's where we're always cutting and trimming and cutting and trimming and borrowing from Peter to pay Paul. . . . There's not much wiggle room there. So we might be robbing from the math line to put to the English line or things of that sort because there's not much left once we write salaries.

In the school leader focus group, principals acknowledged that the budget limits their abilities to adequately address staffing needs: "You're not always able to do all these wish lists." Likewise, teachers across various focus groups expressed frustration at not being involved in decision making about the budget or general resource allocation. For example, all teachers in one focus group agreed on the need to hire more special education teachers to accommodate the growing number of students with individualized education programs (IEPs). The Human Resources section elaborates further on this topic.

Regarding the relationship between resource allocation and data use, some evidence, including school committee meeting minutes and interviews with district personnel, suggests that district leaders actively use student enrollment projections to support budgeting and staffing decisions. Likewise, the fiscal year 2023 and 2024 proposed budget presentations include trends in the enrollment of special student populations, such as students with disabilities and homeless or foster students. However, there is limited evidence to suggest that leaders explicitly incorporate disaggregated student data into the budget or resource allocation process, with the intent of closing achievement, access, and opportunity gaps. Explicitly addressing student needs via equitable budgeting decisions is an area of growth for the district.

Recommendations

- The district should identify meaningful opportunities for teachers, students, and other stakeholders to have a greater voice in district-level decision-making and School Improvement Planning.
- The district should aim to improve relations with its teachers and teachers' union by incorporating teacher feedback in curricular and programmatic decisions, regularly communicating about upcoming decisions and plans, and striving to come to an agreement on its Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- Given the limited resources available to expand district leadership positions, the district should strengthen the capacity of existing school leaders and teachers to focus on improvement.
- The district should directly connect its budget plans and decision-making to data around student opportunity and achievement gaps, and should reallocate existing resources where necessary to ensure its limited resources are used equitably and efficiently.

Human Resources and Professional Development

In Westport, the Human Resources department reports to the superintendent and is contained within the Business Services department, which includes other administrative departments, such as payroll and accounts payable. Overall, Human Resources houses important educator information and contributes to the recruitment and hiring of new staff members for the district. Westport's Human Resources department works in collaboration with the superintendent and the school principals, as well as district leaders in special education, to make hiring decisions. The director of curriculum works outside the Human Resources department to provide professional development classes and opportunities within the district. Teacher assignment in Westport is generally equitable, with each grade level having five to seven classrooms and one teacher per classroom. One special education teacher is assigned to each grade level, and there are individualized support staff for students who need extra assistance. Teachers across focus groups expressed the need for more staff, particularly to aid with shifts in special education.

Teacher mentoring relationships are part of Westport's school structure. In their first year, all new Westport teachers have an assigned mentor. Mentors are not assigned by school or subject area but instead are assigned across schools and subject areas and are intended to help their mentees navigate the transition into the district during their first three years through a series of check-ins and introductory activities. Professional development opportunities within Westport are diverse, especially considering the relatively small size of the district. Teachers also have access to funds for up to $15,000 each year for professional development opportunities outside the district, such as classes at universities, certifications, attainment of an additional degree, conferences, and other additional learning opportunities.

Table 3 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in human resources and professional development.

Table 3. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Human Resources and Professional Development Standard

Indicator	Strengths	Areas for growth
Infrastructure	■ Strong collaboration exists between the Human Resources department and the superintendent.	
Recruitment, hiring, and assignment	■ The *Human Resources Manual* provides a clear, well-defined process, documented with a checklist for Human Resources personnel to follow during the recruitment and hiring process.	■ Recruitment and hiring practices that support creating a diverse staff ■ Staffing, particularly relating to the district's changing special education needs ■ Teacher retention
Supervision, evaluation, and educator development	■ A variety of professional development opportunities are available to teachers. ■ The mentoring program benefits teachers.	■ Connections between teachers' performance and their evaluation reports ■ Evaluation report feedback that provides formative feedback
Recognition, leadership development, and advancement	■ The district offers lead teacher positions, mentor teacher positions, and teacher of the year awards for high-performing teachers.	■ Availability for advancement in job title

Infrastructure

Westport employs effective human resources policies, procedures, and practices. According to the 2022-2023 organizational chart, the Human Resources department is housed within the Business Services department, which reports directly to the superintendent. According to interviews with district leaders, the director of human resources is a member of the superintendent's leadership team and attends "weekly leadership meetings with the director of curriculum, principals, and assistant principals" within the district, but "there's informal communication all the time" between members of the superintendent's leadership team. The interconnectedness between the members of the leadership team—the Human Resources department, the superintendent, and leadership within the schools—is a strength of the district. Within the Business Services department, four staff work across three main areas: accounts payable, payroll, and human resources.

The two staff who work specifically in the Human Resources department are responsible for recruiting and hiring teachers for the district in collaboration with the hiring manager. These staff use multiple platforms to maintain employee documents, such as SchoolSpring, Frontline, and Schoolbrains to house documents, provide rating systems for educator performance, and securely keep personnel profiles. The principals for each school have access to and can use these platforms to examine employment-related data for staffing decisions. According to documentation from the *Human Resources Manual* and based on interviews with district staff, a clear process exists for maintaining, updating, and accessing employment records. District communication to principals

regarding these employment data appeared to be a more passive process; however, principals could access the platforms on their own with prompting from Human Resources.

Recruitment, Hiring, and Assignment

Westport has a clearly defined process for hiring and recruiting new staff, as described in the *Human Resources Manual*. According to teacher focus groups, staffing decisions are based on student needs, which are determined by a variety of variables, such as "classroom size, students on IEPs and what kind of services they need, and students that need more supports." When a need is determined, the hiring process, according to the *Human Resources Manual*, has several steps, which was mostly corroborated by district leader interviews. First, a hiring manager will complete a "Job Posting Request Form" online to signify their need for an additional position. The superintendent must then decide whether to approve the position. If approved, the Human Resources department will first provide internal applicants with the opportunity, then post the position on SchoolSpring, as corroborated by interviews with district leaders. Internal applicants have priority for union positions in accordance with the teachers' union agreement. The hiring manager will then review the résumés garnered by the SchoolSpring post and then select the candidates that they would like to interview for the position. The hiring manager will then set up interviews with the candidates and check their references. After the hiring manager makes a recommendation about who they want to hire, that candidate will have an additional interview with the superintendent. A complete, clear, well-defined checklist of these steps in even-more specific detail is readily available for Human Resources employees to consult in the *Human Resources Manual* throughout the hiring and recruitment process, which is an area of strength for the district.

The *Human Resources Manual* also includes a systematic process for comparing applications and searching for candidates on online platforms to fill open positions. Both processes are well documented and specific, and if implemented accordingly, support equitable hiring decisions. However, despite the meticulous hiring procedures outlined in the manual, the district has not yet identified a reliable strategy to diversify their applicant pool and recruit and hire a diverse and inclusive workforce. When questioned in an interview about hiring diverse candidates for the job, district leaders' responses could be summarized by the following: "On SchoolSpring, we post that we're an equal opportunity employer." Interviews with multiple district leaders indicated that the school does not have plans to diversify the recruitment process. As one district leader stated, "we recruit the best person for the job, regardless of what color, what sex, what gender, whatever they are." District leaders in the Human Resources department confirmed no process for diversifying Westport's recruitment efforts, and the majority demographic of teachers and administration within Westport was not diverse along racial or ethnic lines. DESE data show that Westport students are 89.9 percent White and 34.5 percent low income. An area for growth is addressing the lack of diversity in the district's workforce.

Teacher assignment in Westport is generally distributed evenly across schools, with each grade level within the district having five or six teachers, according to interview data. However, several teachers report being "stretched too thin," particularly in special education. One teacher stated, "There's not enough teachers to service the students that are already on IEPs," a statement the others in the focus groups agreed with. This teacher explained that it is therefore difficult to ensure that all students receive the help that they need. A parent focus group also noted the lack of sufficient

special education staff. Other teacher focus groups echoed this sentiment and explained that the small size of the district, along with a lack of resources, results in understaffing.

Teachers stated that they had a high percentage and growing number of students with disabilities in their classrooms who could use additional supports. According to state data, students with disabilities are 20.4 percent of the Westport student population, which is 1 percentage point higher than the state average of 19.4 percent. Although the numbers do not support the notion that Westport's population of students with disabilities is growing, there was a strong, consistent message across focus groups that teachers felt they needed more staff to assist with special education. This may stem from the district's inclusion efforts, which mean more students with disabilities are in general education classrooms. Overall, perceptions of insufficient teacher staffing, particularly to support teachers and students with disabilities, are an area of growth in Westport.

The sentiment that teachers are "stretched too thin" also is exacerbated by perceptions from district staff of high staff turnover and absences in the district. Teachers in focus groups noted that "we're a small district, so to lose 20 plus people is astronomical." Reducing the high turnover rate is an area of growth for the district. In addition to high teacher turnover rates, district leaders noted that there were high rates of teacher absences within Westport, and one of the key areas of focus for the Human Resources department for the upcoming school year was to make sure that there were enough teachers and substitutes to cover the students. For the current school year, the Human Resources department implemented a new system to manage teacher absences. This year, the department has started to collect and compile attendance data from the district's Frontline attendance management system and write reports on these data to address how the district characterizes excessive absences. The Human Resources department also plans to follow up with teachers about their attendance data in meetings throughout the year.

Supervision, Evaluation, and Educator Development

According to documentation and interviews, Westport provides considerable professional development resources to school and district leaders and school staff. In interviews, school and district leaders stated at the time of the district review that a point of emphasis for professional development was educator evaluations. According to professional development materials provided by the district at the time of this review, Westport district leaders take a professional development course on educator evaluation as part of the district's yearly professional development requirements. This professional development course on educator evaluation informs district leaders about the due dates for uploading educator evaluations to TeachPoint; it also presents important evaluation documents and references, such as DESE's "What to Look For" Observation Guides, information about the Consensogram approach to evaluation, which the district uses, and provides templates for evidence gathering and sharing that administrators can use in evaluations. The professional development program offers a chance for school leaders to discuss their hesitancy in providing evaluative feedback and learning from one another.

Despite Westport dedicating resources for professional development and time for district leaders to collaborate on teacher evaluations, interviewed teachers reported having a negative view of the district's evaluation process. Multiple teachers within focus groups described the evaluation process as "not personal at all," in which evaluators focused on merely "checking all the boxes" on the

evaluation forms instead of assessing each teacher's individual instruction style. Several teachers reported feeling frustrated that the administration came into their classrooms or walked through the school only when they were performing a formal evaluation. As one teacher succinctly noted, "it would be nice if they were more involved and could, you know, come through and just see the different things that we do, not just for a half an hour in October." In addition to the lack of informal walkthroughs, several teachers reported that "a very small number of teachers were actually getting observed" each year, and priority was given to newer teachers rather than those who had been in the district for a while. If teachers were observed and evaluated, many reported that the "feedback was nothing I could benefit from," and "I got better feedback from my colleagues." These negative statements that teachers reported in focus groups about receiving feedback from evaluations were in stark contrast to sentiments made by district leaders performing the evaluations who stated in interviews that they tried to provide one piece of "specific, actionable feedback" to each teacher they evaluated. This discrepancy between teacher and evaluator perceptions of the evaluation process is an area of growth for the district. Overall, areas for growth include providing individualized feedback to teachers in evaluations, performing an increased number of informal walkthroughs of classrooms and schools to build rapport with teachers, and performing an increased number of classroom observations and evaluations for more experienced teachers in the district.

District records suggest that teacher evaluations are uploaded to TeachPoint. Simple random sampling was used to select the sample of 10 from 61 Professional Teacher Status teachers due for summative evaluations for the 2021-2022 school year. A review of the educator evaluation system indicated that teachers received ratings and feedback on their performance based on the Standards and Indicators of Effective Practice; however, only six of the 10 educators selected for review had summative evaluations ready for review. All (six evaluations) were marked as complete and not missing the required components, including a rating for each standard or an overall rating. The review of evaluations indicated that all educators were developing both student learning and professional practice SMART goals. Only one evaluation included multiple sources of evidence, such as observations, student work samples, or other evidence to support progress toward student learning goals, professional learning goals, standards, and indicators. All (100 percent) summative evaluations reviewed included feedback for each standard, and all (100 percent) evaluations reviewed included feedback identifying strengths, whereas only half (50 percent) of the evaluation feedback included areas of improvement.

Administration evaluations also are stored using TeachPoint. Two of Westport's administrative staff members were due for a summative evaluation for the 2021-2022 school year; however, only one evaluation was available for review. The summative evaluation reviewed was complete with performance ratings and assessment of progress toward goals. The evaluation also included a student learning goal and a professional practice goal; however, it did not include multiple sources of evidence to assess performance on summative evaluation standards. The summative administrator evaluation reviewed included evaluator comments for each standard with feedback identifying the administrator's strengths but did not include area(s) for improvement.

Westport teachers described multiple avenues for individualized and robust professional development opportunities, which are overseen by the director of curriculum. According to interviews with district leaders, this director is responsible for managing the mentoring coordinator and

providing relevant educator development programs for both new and experienced staff in the district. Based on interview data, the district's professional development goals include offering professional development that is diverse and can appeal to a wide variety of educators. As stated in an interview, one district leader said the following:

> I had heard through the interview process and then when I got here, that professional development was a bit stagnant and uninteresting and kind of was a one size fits all approach, so the goal for educator development over the past few years has been to offer a variety of different educator development courses and opportunities.

According to interviews with teachers, this diversification of development opportunities has been successful, with many teachers echoing the sentiment that educator professional development is "not always district determined." Instead, teachers describe that the district offers "almost like a menu where teachers can choose what they think is something they need," and teachers feel as if they have a lot of freedom to choose what to focus on that for their professional development in a given year. According to district leaders, the district approves and pays for additional "professional development opportunities during the school day that the school isn't sponsoring," and the district will "reimburse teachers for up to $15,000 each year" on outside professional development opportunities. Overall, professional development is a strength of Westport because it is customizable and informed by teachers' needs.

Upon hire, new employees undergo a three-year mentoring and induction program to help them become acclimated to the district. This program is a districtwide initiative that pairs mentor teachers who have been in the district for several years with teachers who are new to the district, regardless of new teachers' prior teaching experience in other districts. According to interviews with teachers and district personnel, this mentor/mentee partnership is generally not determined based on subject area or school building, although district leaders expressed a preference to pair according to these criteria. Rather, the district's assignment of a mentor attempts to create a point person to help a new teacher adapt to the specific requirements for working within Westport schools. Westport provides a Mentoring Handbook, which is available for teachers to access. This handbook includes a checklist of mentoring activities; a standardized, monthly collaborative assessment for mentee teachers; and a log for 50 hours' worth of mentoring activities that mentee teachers must complete during each of the first three years of their employment with the district to obtain "a professional license from DESE." According to teachers in focus groups, this mentoring program is effective and helpful and includes a series of monthly meetings. As voiced by one teacher in a focus group and echoed in others, "my mentor was such a great source of information and guidance and it [the mentoring program] was really, really helpful." Overall, this mentoring program is an area of strength in the district.

Recognition, Leadership Development, and Advancement

In interviews, district leaders identified several mechanisms for teacher recognition and leadership development in the district. More informally, teachers with high performance can receive "the Teacher of the Year award" at their respective schools, an award meant to recognize teachers' skills and accomplishments. Teachers also can be recognized for their superior teaching abilities and recommended to become mentor teachers within the district. In addition, according to interviews

with the Human Resources department, Westport district representatives "will tap teachers with certain expertise to work on certain initiatives," such as mathematics camps as a recognition of their abilities to teach in these subject areas.

In terms of teacher advancement in Westport, district leaders acknowledged the limits of their small district in an interview with the Human Resources department when they said: "As far as upward mobility, we don't have a lot of openings when we have like one principal and what we have two principals now. Two principals, you know, one curriculum person. So there's not a lot of movement."

However, despite limited availability for upward mobility, there are a few options for teachers to progress. Westport has a limited number of openings for lead teachers each year. According to interviews with district leaders, these lead teachers

> can actually take on some administrative responsibilities, not do evaluations, but they can run the building to try to develop into administrators and leaders. The last one who did [become a teacher leader] ended up becoming an assistant principal and then unfortunately left the district to become a principal because we didn't have any openings. But we do have that one position in our schools where they [lead teachers] are needed. So [it] is a little bit of opportunity for development.

According to focus groups, multiple teachers reported feeling dissatisfied with the limited opportunities for advancement because of their small district size as well as a desire for more opportunities. Overall, according to interviews and documentation, Westport district staff work within the parameters of their small district size and limited capacity to offer additional job opportunities, which are intended to provide Westport teachers the ability to advance in their careers.

Recommendations

- The district should focus its recruitment efforts on improving diversity in the workforce, while also adjusting its hiring policies and practices to encourage a diverse pool of candidates.
- The district should conduct an analysis of its special education staff to ensure sufficient staffing remains in place to meet the needs of its students with disabilities.
- The district should diagnose and address the underlying issues behind its high teacher turnover and high absence rate for teachers.
- In partnership with the teachers' union, the district should review and revise its current evaluation system, with the aim of providing individualized feedback to teachers in evaluations, increasing the number of informal classroom walkthroughs, and increasing the number of classroom observations and evaluations for more experienced teachers.
- The district should identify new opportunities for teachers to take on additional responsibilities or leadership roles to advance their careers.

Financial and Asset Management

Town and district leaders aim to ensure that the allocation and use of funding and other resources improves students' performance, opportunities, and outcomes. Budget development is initially led by Westport's business manager and executive assistant of business services, with support from the superintendent and the district leadership team. From there, the school committee reviews budget requests, drafts a preliminary budget with consultation from district leadership, and then presents a budget to the town's finance committee and Board of Selectman for ultimate approval. However, as various district stakeholders reported in interviews, the budget progress has been complicated by a historic unwillingness from the town to raise property taxes to fund the school district and other town expenditures.

A financial report presented to Westport's Board of Selectman in February 2023 revealed that the town is currently facing a structural deficit that will require a $3 million tax override to maintain level services in the town. According to the report, which was put together with support from the district superintendent, a level-funded fiscal year 2024 budget is projected to require laying off at least 15 and potentially as many as 19 classroom teachers and aides, in addition to decreasing existing student supports and district improvement planning. This 2023 report, in conjunction with district budget presentations, school committee meeting minutes, and interview findings, confirms that the town's ongoing structural deficit impacts the district's overall approach to financial and asset management, including its long-term capital planning.

Table 4 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in financial and asset management.

Table 4. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Financial and Asset Management Standard

Indicator	Strengths	Areas for growth
Budget documentation and reporting	▪ Budget documents are clear, detailed, and easily accessible on the district website.	▪ Connecting budget priorities explicitly to school and district improvement planning and student performance data
Adequate budget	▪ The district effectively procures and uses funding sources outside the budget to support student performance, opportunities, and outcomes.	▪ Ensuring adequate levels of staffing ▪ Efficient and in-district solutions to servicing students with disabilities
Financial tracking, forecasting, controls, and audits	▪ There is frequent communication between the district's business office and the superintendent regarding financial tracking and forecasting.	
Capital planning and facility maintenance	▪ The district prioritizes financing and ongoing maintenance of a new middle/high school.	▪ Long-term capital improvement planning for the town and the district

Budget Documentation and Reporting

Westport maintains clear and accurate budget documents that include information about all sources of funds and the allocation of resources. The district's budgets and relevant presentations from fiscal year 2019 to the present, including the proposed budget for fiscal year 2024, are publicly available on the district's website. Budget presentations and documents break down costs by specific category and school and explicitly make spending comparisons to previous years so that viewers can see change across time. Likewise, participants in the school committee focus group emphasized the "complete transparency" of the budget process, with one member explaining that the school committee often will produce condensed versions of the budget to make it easier for specific stakeholders to understand:

> Every bit of our budget, every line of our budget, is in the budget book and is out there each and every year and available for anyone. As a matter of fact, sometimes we've even taken that budget and done condensed versions and gone to the Council on Aging and held other public [meetings] to explain our budget. Because . . . it's like me putting something out there in German and not having an idea how to speak the language. So we do try to give opportunities to the PTO [parent teacher organization] or if anybody requests [the budget] to break it down and make them have a better understanding of it.

Budget documents are a strength of the district: They are clear, accurate, complete, and user-friendly, and they provide easily accessible historical spending data from the prior fiscal year for comparisons.

Although budget presentations, such as the fiscal year 2024 presentation to the town's finance committee, cite the district's improvement goals and include data on special student populations (e.g., students with special needs), the budget itself does not explicitly reference or explain budget priorities. As noted by several school and district leaders, limitations on funding restrict the district's ability to use the budget to address improvement priorities. As explained in a previous section, the majority of the budget (85 percent for the 2024 proposed budget) consists of salary, a largely fixed cost that contractually increases every year. For this reason, when asked about areas of growth for the district, one district leader explained that "there's no room for growth with that [referring to the budget] because they're just covering contractual [costs]. So how do you make a change and keep up with the times if we don't have the funding to do that?"

Explicitly connecting the budget to school and district improvement priorities and opportunities and access gaps identified by student performance data is an area of growth for the district.

The town of Westport and the school district lack a written municipal agreement outlining cost-sharing—as stated in several interviews with the school committee and district leaders. However, town and district-level stakeholders referenced examples of collaboration between the town and district, such as the police department funding the school resource officer and the town managing the health benefits for district employees. In addition, the school committee and a town-level administrator noted that the school district will typically receive 54 percent of the town's net new revenue, or what the town calls "free cash," as part of its budget development process to address the shortfall between the proposed district budget and the amount that the town is willing to

allocate. A member of the school committee focus group described this process of reconciling the town and school district's budget as a "very delicate situation":

> We look at the gap, and we try then to do some collaborating meetings with the town and the finance committee to try to bridge that gap, which is usually with free cash, which is always a big no no. But in a town such as this, there's sometimes no choice that we have been the recipient of free cash for the last three years. So we try to collaborate with the town. It's a very delicate situation because on [the] town floor, when you're moving for free cash, the majority of the votes are going to vote for the schools.

The town and district's ongoing commitment to distributing the free cash among themselves to address their budget shortfall demonstrates a commitment to municipal cost sharing.

Adequate Budget

According to the proposed fiscal year 2024 budget and accompanying presentation to the finance committee, the fiscal year 2024 budget estimates a total operating budget of $21,706,159, which is $1,061,886 greater than the amount that the town allotted. As interviews with town and district leaders and a review of past budget presentations confirm, this shortfall between the town's expected allotment and the district's identified need is consistent with previous years. Similarly, interview and focus group participants consistently indicated that the general appropriation funds allowed by the town each year do not meet the needs for net school spending and accompanying costs and that, even with the inclusion of "free cash," a significant budget shortfall remains. According to the fiscal year 2023 "It's Time" report – written by members of the public in consultation with the superintendent – projections for the next budget suggest that the district may need to layoff up to 19 staff.

Various stakeholders, including several teacher focus groups and a focus group of district-level officials, expressed frustration at the "constant battle" to find the funds to sustain the district's staffing. Teachers and district administrators specifically described a climate of fear about teacher layoffs, which the district has attempted to ease in previous years by cutting administrative positions rather than classroom-level teachers. Support for level staffing and avoiding turnover is an area of growth for the district.

Multiple stakeholder groups expressed dissatisfaction with the limited school budget. Currently, the district receives the minimum allotment of Chapter 70 state aid. As various district and town leaders explained, there is a discrepancy between the town's perceived ability or willingness to fund the school district and the state's formula for what the town should allot to the district, given its income level and property valuation. One district leader explained as follows:

> That is a problem because while the state is suggesting that the community has the wherewithal to pay more, our community has demonstrated a distaste for doing that. We've had 17 attempted overrides in this community, or 19 attempted overrides. Only two have passed since 1994.

Several stakeholders, including school committee members, town and district officials, parents, and teachers, were particularly concerned about funding for the growing needs for students with

disabilities, which the district lacks the supports to accommodate. This gap in supports requires that the district fund out-of-district placements, which pose additional costs via transportation. The February 2023 "It's Time" report articulated the following:

> Because we do not have the professional staff to address the special education needs of Westport students (which range from physical disability to emotional and mental health needs), too many students need to be transported out of town. Appropriate transportation of each of these students can cost anywhere from $300 to $700 a day.

The overall lack of a sufficient budget, and particularly the lack of an effective and in-district solution to servicing special needs students, is an area for growth.

Despite the aforementioned budget difficulties, a strength for the district is its use of available funding to effectively support student performance, opportunities, and outcomes and procuring additional funds via grants and community donations. According to the fiscal year 2024 budget presentation, the district reported receiving $3,254,827 in grant funding. Likewise, both the school committee and town officials praised the superintendent and the director of curriculum for their "creative ways" to fund accelerated learning and afterschool opportunities, as exemplified by the district's 2023 procurement of a $400,000 grant to purchase zSpace computers for middle and high school students. District officials and teachers also described relying on the Westport Education Foundation and the PTO to fund field trips and classroom supplies. The district effectively makes use of additional funding sources outside the budget to support student performance, opportunities, and outcomes, which is a strength for the district.

Financial Tracking, Forecasting, Controls, and Audits

District leaders reported that the district's business office, which is led by the business manager and the executive assistant for business services, meets with the superintendent regularly to provide updates on current and forecasted spending. As school committee meeting minutes and interviews with district leaders indicate, business office leaders sit on the superintendent's leadership team, which meets bimonthly, and the business office presents to the school committee updates on grant spending on a quarterly basis. The business office is responsible for meeting end-of-year reporting requirements and has done so without any reported issues.

The business office uses SoftRight financial software to produce quarterly reports for the school committee. District-level officials also reported using various Excel spreadsheets to monitor on a more regular basis what they described as "big ticket items" in the budget, such as the special education and out-of-district transportation costs. Business office personnel described frequent communication with both the superintendent and school leaders, with one business office member explaining that

> we meet weekly; we have a leadership meeting weekly, which is all of our administration. So we meet for 2 hours every Wednesday and a lot of that [referring to spending and budget needs] comes up. So, like the building administration might say, oh, the secretary was saying we ran out of paper, this is going on, this expense just happened or the intercom system is not working . . . we sit pretty regularly. [Administrator] and I probably meet the superintendent three to four times a day.

Another staff member in the business office described checking in with the superintendent several times a day about budget spending to ensure "we stay within budget." This frequent communication between the district's business office and the superintendent regarding financial tracking and forecasting is a strength for the district.

The public accounting firm Roselli, Clark & Associates yearly audits both the town and district, producing a combined report on the town and district's financial activities. The business office also reported conducting procurement audits for DESE on school lunch and additional grant items. The most recent audits revealed no concerns.

Capital Planning and Facility Maintenance

The district submits all capital improvement requests to the town's CIPC, which consists of the town administrator, a member of the school committee, and other relevant stakeholders. The CIPC meets on an as-needed basis to review capital improvement requests and monitor ongoing projects. On the Town of Westport website, the CIPC webpage includes publicly available meeting minutes and indicates that committee meetings occur roughly once per month. One member of the CIPC explained that

> we start meeting in September and [review] the available funding that we have through free cash or the stabilization account, and so forth. We review any projects, all the departments submit their projects, we review and rank them, and then recommend to town meeting finance committee what projects should be approved.

To identify capital and facility improvement needs, the superintendent meets regularly with the director of facilities, who is a member of the superintendent's leadership team. The district also submits to the CIPC a list of capital improvement projects, ranging from immediate need (e.g., finish air-conditioning installation) to long-term planning (e.g., purchasing two special-education vans to help reduce the cost of special education transportation). One area of growth is long-term capital improvement planning for the town and district that clearly articulates capital improvement needs and a timeline for addressing them; a district leader also made this recommendation.

Several district leaders expressed that long-term capital improvement planning is sometimes challenging because of the CIPC's reticence to finance capital improvement requests submitted by the district. One district leader explained, "Our long-time [sic] capital plan is always handicapped by a budget, right? So we don't have a budget that's going to allow us to improve on what we have." As corroborated by another district leader and the CIPC meeting minutes, the CIPC voted down several times the request to repair the parking lot at the elementary school despite its description as a "safety issue." The "It's Time" report also stated that the town's current structural deficit necessitates a "delay in capital expenditures" and a "critical decrease in the stabilization fund balance," which, as explained by a town official, is a funding source for capital improvement projects.

Despite the aforementioned funding challenges, several stakeholders pointed to the construction of a new middle/high school as a successful capital improvement project. The new building began construction after asbestos was discovered in the previous middle school in 2011. Since then, the town administrator and superintendent collaborated on the new building's financing and eventual

construction. The successful financing of infrastructure in the form of this building is a strength for the district.

Recommendations

- In FY25 and beyond, the district should engage in a process of strategic budgeting that is rooted in student data and priorities from the Strategic Plan or Strategic Improvement Plans.
- The district should partner with outside stakeholders, particularly the finance committee, to determine short-, medium-, and long-term sustainable solutions which respond to the increasing costs of necessary services for students with disabilities.
- In collaboration with town officials and finance committee members, the district should create a long-term capital plan that includes anticipated needs, projects, timelines, and costs to give the town a sustainable, long-term plan.

Appendix A. Summary of Site Visit Activities

The AIR team completed the following activities as part of the district review activities in Westport. The team conducted 60 classroom observations during the week of January 23, 2023, and held interviews and focus groups between January 23 and January 27, 2023. The site visit team conducted interviews and focus groups with the following representatives from the school and the district:

- Superintendent
- Other district leaders
- School committee members
- Teachers' association members
- Principals
- Teachers
- Parents
- Town representative

The review team analyzed multiple datasets and reviewed numerous documents before and during the site visit, including the following:

- Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates
- Data on the district's staffing and finances
- Published educational reports on the district by DESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability
- District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district's end-of-year financial reports
- All completed program and administrator evaluations and a random selection of completed teacher evaluations

Appendix B. Districtwide Instructional Observation Report

Westport Community Schools

Classroom Visits: Summary of Findings

Districtwide Instructional Observation Report

January 2023

201 Jones Road
Waltham, Massachusetts
781-373-7000 | TTY 877.334.3499
www.air.org

Contents

Introduction

The *Districtwide Instructional Observation Report* presents ratings for the classroom observations that were conducted by certified observers at American Institutes for Research (AIR) as part of the Massachusetts District Reviews.

Four observers visited Westport Community Schools during the week of January 24, 2023. Observers conducted 60 observations in a sample of classrooms across three schools. Observations were conducted in grades K-12 and focused primarily on literacy, English language arts, and mathematics instruction.

The classroom observations were guided by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), developed by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia. Three levels of CLASS Manuals were used: K–3, Upper Elementary, and Secondary. The K–3 tool was used to observe grades K–3, the Upper Elementary tool was used to observe grades 4–5, and the Secondary tool was used to observe grades 6–12.

The K–3 protocol includes 10 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in Table 1).

Table 1. CLASS K–3 Domains and Dimensions

Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
■ Positive Climate ■ Negative Climate ■ Teacher Sensitivity ■ Regard for Student Perspectives	■ Behavior Management ■ Productivity ■ Instructional Learning Formats	■ Concept Development ■ Quality of Feedback ■ Language Modeling

The Upper Elementary and Secondary protocols include 11 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in Table 2), in addition to Student Engagement.

Table 2. CLASS Upper Elementary and Secondary Domains and Dimensions

Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
■ Positive Climate ■ Teacher Sensitivity ■ Regard for Student Perspectives	■ Behavior Management ■ Productivity ■ Negative Climate	■ Instructional Learning Formats ■ Content Understanding ■ Analysis and Inquiry ■ Quality of Feedback ■ Instructional Dialogue
Student Engagement		

When conducting a visit to a classroom, the observer rates each dimension (including Student Engagement) on a scale of 1 to 7. A rating of 1 or 2 indicates that the dimension was never or rarely evident during the visit. For example, a rating of 1 or 2 on Teacher Sensitivity indicates that, at the time of the visit, the teacher was not aware of students who needed extra support or attention, was

unresponsive to or dismissive of students, or was ineffective at addressing students' problems; as a result, students rarely sought support from the teacher or communicated openly with the teacher. A rating of 3, 4, or 5 indicates that the dimension was evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. A rating of 6 or 7 indicates that the dimension was reflected in all or most classroom activities and in a way that included all or most students.

Members of the observation team who visited the classrooms all received training on the CLASS protocol and then passed a rigorous certification exam for each CLASS protocol to ensure that they were able to accurately rate the dimensions. All observers must pass an exam annually to maintain their certification.

Research on CLASS protocol shows that students in classrooms that rated high using this observation tool have greater gains in social skills and academic success than students in classrooms with lower ratings (MET Project, 2010; CASTL, n.d.). Furthermore, small improvements on these domains can affect student outcomes: "The ability to demonstrate even small changes in effective interactions has practical implications—differences in just over 1 point on the CLASS 7-point scale translate into improved achievement and social skill development for students" (CASTL, n.d., p. 3).

In this report, each CLASS dimension is defined, and descriptions of the dimensions at the high (6 or 7), middle (3, 4, or 5), and low levels (1 or 2) are presented *(definitions and rating descriptions are derived from the CLASS K–3, Upper Elementary, and Secondary Manuals).* For each dimension we indicate the frequency of classroom observations across the ratings and provide a districtwide average of the observed classrooms. In cases where a dimension is included in more than one CLASS manual level, those results are combined on the dimension-specific pages. In the summary of ratings table following the dimension-specific pages the averages for every dimension are presented by grade band (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12). For each dimension, we indicate the grade levels for which this dimension is included.

Positive Climate

Emotional Support domain, Grades K–12

Positive Climate reflects the emotional connection between the teacher and students and among students and the warmth, respect, and enjoyment communicated by verbal and nonverbal interactions (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 23, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 21, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 21). Table 3 (as well as tables for the remaining dimensions) includes the number of classrooms for each rating on each dimension and the district average for that dimension.

Table 3. Positive Climate: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Positive Climate District Average*: 4.9

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	60	4.9
Grades K-5	0	0	3	6	8	11	2	30	5.1
Grades 6-8	0	0	5	3	5	1	0	14	4.1
Grades 9-12	0	0	2	5	1	5	3	16	5.1

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 3, the district average is computed as: ([3 x 10] + [4 x 14] + [5 x 14] + [6 x 17] + [7 x 5]) ÷ 60 observations = 4.9

Ratings in the Low Range. All indicators are absent or only minimally present. Teachers and students do not appear to share a warm, supportive relationship. Interpersonal connections are not evident or only minimally evident. Affect in the classroom is flat, and there are rarely instances of teachers and students smiling, sharing humor, or laughing together. There are no, or very few, positive communications among the teacher and students; the teacher does not communicate encouragement. There is no evidence that students and the teacher respect one another or that the teacher encourages students to respect one another.

Ratings in the Middle Range. There are some indications that the teacher and students share a warm and supportive relationship, but some students may be excluded from this relationship, either by the teacher or the students. Some relationships appear constrained—for example, the teacher expresses a perfunctory interest in students, or encouragement seems to be an automatic statement and is not sincere. Sometimes, teachers and students demonstrate respect for one another.

Ratings in the High Range. There are many indications that the relationship among students and the teacher is positive and warm. The teacher is typically in close proximity to students, and encouragement is sincere and personal. There are frequent displays of shared laughter, smiles, and enthusiasm. Teachers and students show respect for one another (e.g., listening, using calm voices, using polite language). Positive communication (both verbal and nonverbal) and mutual respect are evident throughout the session.

Teacher Sensitivity

Emotional Support domain, Grades K−12

Teacher Sensitivity encompasses the teacher's awareness of and responsiveness to students' academic and emotional needs. High levels of sensitivity facilitate students' abilities to actively explore and learn because the teacher consistently provides comfort, reassurance, and encouragement (*CLASS K–3 Manual,* p. 32, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 27, *CLASS Secondary Manual,* p. 27).

Table 4. Teacher Sensitivity: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Teacher Sensitivity District Average*: 5.1

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	60	5.1
Grades K-5	0	2	2	2	10	8	6	30	5.3
Grades 6-8	0	0	4	3	6	1	0	14	4.3
Grades 9-12	1	0	0	4	2	3	6	16	5.4

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 4, the district average is computed as: ([1 x 1] + [2 x 2] + [3 x 6] + [4 x 9] + [5 x 18] + [6 x 12] + [7 x 12]) ÷ 60 observations = 5.1

Ratings in the Low Range. In these sessions, the teacher has not been aware of students who need extra support and pays little attention to students' needs. As a result, students are frustrated, confused, and disengaged. The teacher is unresponsive to and dismissive of students and may ignore students, squash their enthusiasm, and not allow them to share their moods or feelings. The teacher is not effective in addressing students' needs and does not appropriately acknowledge situations that may be upsetting to students. Students rarely seek support from the teacher and minimize conversations with the teacher, not sharing ideas or responding to questions.

Ratings in the Middle Range. The teacher is sometimes aware of student needs or aware of only a limited type of student needs, such as academic needs, not social-emotional needs. Or the teacher may be aware of some students and not of other students. The teacher does not always realize a student is confused and needs extra help or when a student already knows the material being taught. The teacher may be responsive at times to students but at other times may ignore or dismiss students. The teacher may respond only to students who are upbeat and positive and not support students who are upset. Sometimes, the teacher is effective in addressing students' concerns or problems, but not always.

Ratings in the High Range. The teacher's awareness of students and their needs is consistent and accurate. The teacher may predict how difficult a new task is for a student and acknowledge this difficulty. The teacher is responsive to students' comments and behaviors, whether positive or negative. The teacher consistently addresses students' problems and concerns and is effective in doing so. Students are obviously comfortable with the teacher and share ideas, work comfortably together, and ask and respond to questions, even difficult questions.

Regard for Student Perspectives

Emotional Support domain, Grades K–12

Regard for Student Perspectives captures the degree to which the teacher's interactions with students and classroom activities place an emphasis on students' interests, motivations, and points of view and encourage student responsibility and autonomy (*CLASS K–3 Manual,* p. 38, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 35, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 35).

Table 5. Regard for Student Perspectives: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Regard for Student Perspectives District Average*: 3.7

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	60	3.7
Grades K-5	0	5	12	6	6	1	0	30	3.5
Grades 6-8	1	2	9	1	0	1	0	14	3.0
Grades 9-12	0	0	3	8	1	1	3	16	4.6

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 5, the district average is computed as: ([1 x 1] + [2 x 7] + [3 x 24] + [4 x 15] + [5 x 7] + [6 x 3] + [7 x 3]) ÷ 60 observations = 3.7

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher exhibits an inflexible, rigid adherence to his or her plan, without considering student ideas or allowing students to make contributions. The teacher inhibits student enthusiasm by imposing guidelines or making remarks that inhibit student expression. The teacher may rigidly adhere to a lesson plan and not respond to student interests. The teacher does not allow students any autonomy on how they conduct an activity, may control materials tightly, and may offer few opportunities for students to help out with classroom responsibilities. There are few opportunities for students to talk and express themselves.

Ratings in the Middle Range. The teacher exhibits control at times and at other times follows the students' lead and gives them some choices and opportunities to follow their interests. There are some opportunities for students to exercise autonomy, but student choice is limited. The teacher may assign students responsibility in the classroom, but in a limited way. At times, the teacher dominates the discussion, but at other times the teacher allows students to share ideas, although only at a minimal level or for a short period of time.

Ratings in the High Range. The teacher is flexible in following student leads, interests, and ideas and looks for ways to meaningfully engage students. Although the teacher has a lesson plan, students' ideas are incorporated into the lesson plan. The teacher consistently supports student autonomy and provides meaningful leadership opportunities. Students have frequent opportunities to talk, share ideas, and work together. Students have appropriate freedom of movement during activities.

Negative Climate

Emotional Support domain, Grades K–3
Classroom Organization domain, Grades 4–12

Negative Climate reflects the overall level of expressed negativity in the classroom. The frequency, quality, and intensity of teacher and student negativity are key to this dimension (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 28, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 55, *CLASS Secondary Manual,* p. 55). For the purposes of this report, we have inversed the observers scores, to be consistent with the range scores across all dimensions. Therefore, a high range score in this dimension indicates an absence of negative climate, and a low range score indicates the presence of negative climate.[1]

Table 6. Negative Climate: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Negative Climate District Average*: 6.9

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	60	6.9
Grades K-5	0	0	0	0	1	1	28	30	6.9
Grades 6-8	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	14	7.0
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	0	1	1	14	16	6.8

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 6, the district average is computed as: ([5 x 2] + [6 x 2] + [7 x 56]) ÷ 60 observations = 6.9

Ratings in the Low Range. Negativity is pervasive. The teacher may express constant irritation, annoyance, or anger; unduly criticize students; or consistently use a harsh tone and/or take a harsh stance as he or she interacts with students. Threats or yelling are frequently used to establish control. Language is disrespectful and sarcastic. Severe negativity, such as the following actions, would lead to a high rating on negative climate, even if the action is not extended: students bullying one another, a teacher hitting a student, or students physically fighting with one another.

Ratings in the Middle Range. There are some expressions of mild negativity by the teacher or students. The teacher may express irritability, use a harsh tone, and/or express annoyance—usually during difficult moments in the classroom. Threats or yelling may be used to establish control over the classroom, but not constantly; they are used more as a response to situations. At times, the teacher and students may be sarcastic or disrespectful toward one another.

Ratings in the High Range. There is no display of negativity: No strong expressions of anger or aggression are exhibited, either by the teacher or students; if there is such a display, it is contained and does not escalate. The teacher does not issue threats or yell to establish control. The teacher and students are respectful and do not express sarcasm.

---

[1] When observers rate this dimension it is scored so that a low rating (indicating little or no evidence of a negative climate) is better than a high rating (indicating abundant evidence of a negative climate). To be consistent across all ratings, for the purposes of this report we have inversed this scoring.

Behavior Management

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K–12

Behavior Management refers to the teacher's ability to provide clear behavioral expectations and use effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 45, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 41, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 41).

Table 7. Behavior Management: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Behavior Management District Average*: 6.7

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**60**	**6.7**
Grades K-5	0	0	0	1	1	8	20	30	6.6
Grades 6-8	0	0	0	0	0	1	13	14	6.9
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	0	0	5	11	16	6.7

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 7, the district average is computed as: ([4 x 1] + [5 x 1] + [6 x 14] + [7 x 44]) ÷ 60 observations = 6.7

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the classroom is chaotic. There are no rules and expectations, or they are not enforced consistently. The teacher does not monitor the classroom effectively and only reacts to student disruption, which is frequent. There are frequent instances of misbehavior in the classroom, and the teacher's attempts to redirect misbehavior are ineffective. The teacher does not use cues, such as eye contact, slight touches, gestures, or physical proximity, to respond to and redirect negative behavior.

Ratings in the Middle Range. Although rules and expectations may be stated, they are not consistently enforced, or the rules may be unclear. Sometimes, the teacher proactively anticipates and prevents misbehavior, but at other times the teacher ignores behavior problems until it is too late. Misbehavior may escalate because redirection is not always effective. Episodes of misbehavior are periodic.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the rules and guidelines for behavior are clear, and they are consistently reinforced by the teacher. The teacher monitors the classroom and prevents problems from developing, using subtle cues to redirect behavior and address situations before they escalate. The teacher focuses on positive behavior and consistently affirms students' desirable behaviors. The teacher effectively uses cues to redirect behavior. There are no, or very few, instances of student misbehavior or disruptions.

Productivity

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K–12

Productivity considers how well the teacher manages instructional time and routines and provides activities for students so that they have the opportunity to be involved in learning activities (*CLASS K–3 Manual,* p. 51, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 49, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 49).

Table 8. Productivity: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Productivity District Average*: 6.5

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**60**	**6.5**
Grades K-5	0	0	0	1	2	9	18	30	6.5
Grades 6-8	0	0	0	0	1	2	11	14	6.7
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	1	1	5	9	16	6.4

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 8, the district average is computed as: ([4 x 2] + [5 x 4] + [6 x 16] + [7 x 38]) ÷ 60 observations = 6.5

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low level, the teacher provides few activities for students. Much time is spent on managerial tasks (such as distributing papers) and/or on behavior management. Frequently during the observation, students have little to do and spend time waiting. The routines of the classroom are not clear and, as a result, students waste time, are not engaged, and are confused. Transitions take a long time and/or are too frequent. The teacher does not have activities organized and ready and seems to be caught up in last-minute preparations.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the teacher does provide activities for students but loses learning time to disruptions or management tasks. There are certain times when the teacher provides clear activities to students, but there are other times when students wait and lose focus. Some students (or all students, at some point) do not know what is expected of them. Some of the transitions may take too long, or classrooms may be productive during certain periods but then not productive during transitions. Although the teacher is mostly prepared for the class, last-minute preparations may still infringe on learning time.

Ratings in the High Range. The classroom runs very smoothly. The teacher provides a steady flow of activities for students, so students do not have downtime and are not confused about what to do next. The routines of the classroom are efficient, and all students know how to move from one activity to another and where materials are. Students understand the teacher's instructions and directions. Transitions are quick, and there are not too many of them. The teacher is fully prepared for the lesson.

Instructional Learning Formats

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K – 3
Instructional Support domain, Grades 4 – 12

Instructional Learning Formats refer to the ways in which the teacher maximizes students' interest, engagement, and abilities to learn from the lesson and activities (*CLASS K – 3 Manual*, p. 57; *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 63, *CLASS Secondary Manual,* p. 61).

Table 9. Instructional Learning Formats: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Instructional Learning Formats District Average*: 4.8

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	60	4.8
Grades K-5	0	1	2	9	8	8	2	30	4.9
Grades 6-8	0	0	1	6	5	2	0	14	4.6
Grades 9-12	0	0	1	3	8	3	1	16	5.0

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 9, the district average is computed as: ([2 x 1] + [3 x 4] + [4 x 18] + [5 x 21] + [6 x 13] + [7 x 3]) ÷ 60 observations = 4.8

Ratings in the Low Range. The teacher exerts little effort in facilitating engagement in the lesson. Learning activities may be limited and seem to be at the rote level, with little teacher involvement. The teacher relies on one learning modality (e.g., listening) and does not use other modalities (e.g., movement, visual displays) to convey information and enhance learning. Or the teacher may be ineffective in using other modalities, not choosing the right props for the students or the classroom conditions. Students are uninterested and uninvolved in the lesson. The teacher does not attempt to guide students toward learning objectives and does not help them focus on the lesson by providing appropriate tools and asking effective questions.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the teacher sometimes facilitates engagement in the lesson but at other times does not, or the teacher facilitates engagement for some students and not for other students. The teacher may not allow students enough time to explore or answer questions. Sometimes, the teacher uses a variety of modalities to help students reach a learning objective, but at other times the teacher does not. Student engagement is inconsistent, or some students are engaged and other students are not. At times, students are aware of the learning objective and at other times they are not. The teacher may sometimes use strategies to help students organize information but at other times does not.

Ratings in the High Range. The teacher has multiple strategies and tools to facilitate engagement and learning and encourage participation. The teacher may move around, talk and play with students, ask open-ended questions of students, and allow students to explore. A variety of tools and props are used, including movement and visual/auditory resources. Students are consistently interested and engaged in the activities and lessons. The teacher focuses students on the learning objectives, which students understand. The teacher uses advanced organizers to prepare students for an activity, as well as reorientation strategies that help students regain focus.

Concept Development

Instructional Support domain, Grades K–3

Concept Development refers to the teacher's use of instructional discussions and activities to promote students' higher order thinking skills and cognition and the teacher's focus on understanding rather than on rote instruction (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 64).

Table 10. Concept Development: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Concept Development District Average*: 3.4

Grade Band	Low Range	Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**20**	**3.4**
Grades K-3**	0	8	2	7	1	2	0	20	3.4

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 10, the district average is computed as: ([2 x 8] + [3 x 2] + [4 x 7] + [5 x 1] + [6 x 2]) ÷ 20 observations = 3.4

**Concept Development does not appear in the CLASS Upper Elementary Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades K-3 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher does not attempt to develop students' understanding of ideas and concepts, focusing instead on basic facts and skills. Discussion and activities do not encourage students to analyze and reason. There are few, if any, opportunities for students to create or generate ideas and products. The teacher does not link concepts to one another and does not ask students to make connections with previous content or their actual lives. The activities and the discussion are removed from students' lives and from their prior knowledge.

Ratings in the Middle Range. To some extent, the teacher uses discussions and activities to encourage students to analyze and reason and focuses somewhat on understanding of ideas. The activities and discussions are not fully developed, however, and there is still instructional time that focuses on facts and basic skills. Students may be provided some opportunities for creating and generating ideas, but the opportunities are occasional and not planned out. Although some concepts may be linked and also related to students' previous learning, such efforts are brief. The teacher makes some effort to relate concepts to students' lives but does not elaborate enough to make the relationship meaningful to students.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the teacher frequently guides students to analyze and reason during discussions and activities. Most of the questions are open ended and encourage students to think about connections and implications. Teachers use problem solving, experimentation, and prediction; comparison and classification; and evaluation and summarizing to promote analysis and reasoning. The teacher provides students with opportunities to be creative and generate ideas. The teacher consistently links concepts to one another and to previous learning and relates concepts to students' lives.

Content Understanding

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4 – 12

Content Understanding refers to the depth of lesson content and the approaches used to help students comprehend the framework, key ideas, and procedures in an academic discipline. At a high level, this dimension refers to interactions among the teacher and students that lead to an integrated understanding of facts, skills, concepts, and principles (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 70, *CLASS Secondary Manual,* p. 68).

Table 11. Content Understanding: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Content Understanding District Average*: 4.2

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	40	4.2
Grades 4-5**	0	0	5	1	2	2	0	10	4.1
Grades 6-8	0	3	7	2	2	0	0	14	3.2
Grades 9-12	0	0	1	5	5	3	2	16	5.0

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 11, the district average is computed as: ([2 x 3] + [3 x 13] + [4 x 8] + [5 x 9] + [6 x 5] + [7 x 2]) ÷ 40 observations = 4.2

**Content Understanding does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the focus of the class is primarily on presenting discrete pieces of topically related information, absent broad, organizing ideas. The discussion and materials fail to effectively communicate the essential attributes of the concepts and procedures to students. The teacher makes little effort to elicit or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions or to integrate previously learned material when presenting new information.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the focus of the class is sometimes on meaningful discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. At other times, the focus is on discrete pieces of information. Class discussion and materials communicate some of the essential attributes of concepts and procedures, but examples are limited in scope or not consistently provided. The teacher makes some attempt to elicit and/or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions and/or to integrate information with previously learned materials; however, these moments are limited in depth or inconsistent.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the focus of the class is on encouraging deep understanding of content through the provision of meaningful, interactive discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. Class discussion and materials consistently communicate the essential attributes of concepts and procedures to students. New concepts and procedures and broad ideas are consistently linked to students' prior knowledge in ways that advance their understanding and clarify misconceptions.

Analysis and Inquiry

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4 – 12

Analysis and Inquiry assesses the degree to which students are engaged in higher level thinking skills through their application of knowledge and skills to novel and/or open-ended problems, tasks, and questions. Opportunities for engaging in metacognition (thinking about thinking) also are included (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 81, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 76).

Table 12. Analysis and Inquiry: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Analysis and Inquiry District Average*: 2.9

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**40**	**2.9**
Grades 4-5**	1	6	1	1	0	1	0	10	2.6
Grades 6-8	4	6	3	0	0	1	0	14	2.2
Grades 9-12	3	2	4	1	2	4	0	16	3.6

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 12, the district average is computed as: ([1 x 8] + [2 x 14] + [3 x 8] + [4 x 2] + [5 x 2] + [6 x 6]) ÷ 40 observations = 2.9

**Analysis and Inquiry does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, students do not engage in higher order thinking skills. Instruction is presented in a rote manner, and there are no opportunities for students to engage in novel or open-ended tasks. Students are not challenged to apply previous knowledge and skills to a new problem, nor are they encouraged to think about, evaluate, or reflect on their own learning. Students do not have opportunities to plan their own learning experiences.

Ratings in the Middle Range. Students occasionally engage in higher order thinking through analysis and inquiry, but the episodes are brief or limited in depth. The teacher provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills within familiar contexts and offers guidance to students but does not provide opportunities for analysis and problem solving within novel contexts and/or without teacher support. Students have occasional opportunities to think about their own thinking through explanations, self-evaluations, reflection, and planning; these opportunities, however, are brief and limited in depth.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, students consistently engage in extended opportunities to use higher order thinking through analysis and inquiry. The teacher provides opportunities for students to independently solve or reason through novel and open-ended tasks that require students to select, utilize, and apply existing knowledge and skills. Students have multiple opportunities to think about their own thinking through explanations, self-evaluations, reflection, and planning.

Quality of Feedback

Instructional Support domain, Grades K – 12

Quality of Feedback refers to the degree to which the teacher provides feedback that expands learning and understanding and encourages continued participation in the learning activity (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 72). In the upper elementary and secondary classrooms, significant feedback also may be provided by peers (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 89, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 93). Regardless of the source, the focus of the feedback motivates learning.

Table 13. Quality of Feedback: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Quality of Feedback District Average*: 3.2

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**60**	**3.2**
Grades K-5	3	6	12	3	3	2	1	30	3.2
Grades 6-8	2	3	4	3	1	1	0	14	3.1
Grades 9-12	2	2	5	3	3	1	0	16	3.4

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 13, the district average is computed as: ([1 x 7] + [2 x 11] + [3 x 21] + [4 x 9] + [5 x 7] + [6 x 4] + [7 x 1]) ÷ 60 observations = 3.2

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher dismisses incorrect responses or misperceptions and rarely scaffolds student learning. The teacher is more interested in students providing the correct answer than understanding. Feedback is perfunctory. The teacher may not provide opportunities to learn whether students understand or are interested. The teacher rarely questions students or asks them to explain their thinking and reasons for their responses. The teacher does not or rarely provides information that might expand student understanding and rarely offers encouragement that increases student effort and persistence.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In the middle range, the teacher sometimes scaffolds students, but this is not consistent. On occasion, the teacher facilitates feedback loops so that students may elaborate and expand on their thinking, but these moments are not sustained long enough to accomplish a learning objective. Sometimes, the teacher asks students about or prompts them to explain their thinking and provides information to help students understand, but sometimes the feedback is perfunctory. At times, the teacher encourages student efforts and persistence.

Ratings in the High Range. In this range, the teacher frequently scaffolds students who are having difficulty, providing hints or assistance as needed. The teacher engages students in feedback loops to help them understand ideas or reach the right response. The teacher often questions students, encourages them to explain their thinking, and provides additional information that may help students understand. The teacher regularly encourages students' efforts and persistence.

Language Modeling

Instructional Support domain, Grades K – 3

Language Modeling refers to the quality and amount of the teacher's use of language stimulation and language facilitation techniques (*CLASS K – 3 Manual*, p. 79).

Table 14. Language Modeling: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Language Modeling District Average*: 3.4

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	20	3.4
Grades K-3**	0	7	4	3	6	0	0	20	3.4

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 14, the district average is computed as: ([2 x 7] + [3 x 4] + [4 x 3] + [5 x 6]) ÷ 20 observations = 3.4

**Language Modeling does not appear in the CLASS Upper Elementary Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades K-3 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. In the low range, there are few conversations in the classroom, particularly between the students and the teacher. The teacher responds to students' initiating talk with only a few words, limits students' use of language (in responding to questions) and asks questions that mainly elicit closed-ended responses. The teacher does not or rarely extends students' responses or repeats them for clarification. The teacher does not engage in self-talk or parallel talk—explaining what he or she or the students are doing. The teacher does not use new words or advanced language with students. The language used has little variety.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In this range, the teacher talks with students and shows some interest in students, but the conversations are limited and not prolonged. Usually, the teacher directs the conversations, although the conversations may focus on topics of interest to students. More often, there is a basic exchange of information but limited conversation. The teacher asks a mix of closed- and open-ended questions, although the closed-ended questions may require only short responses. Sometimes, the teacher extends students' responses or repeats what students say. Sometimes, the teacher maps his or her own actions and the students' actions through language and description. The teacher sometimes uses advanced language with students.

Ratings in the High Range. There are frequent conversations in the classroom, particularly between students and the teacher, and these conversations promote language use. Students are encouraged to converse and feel they are valued conversational partners. The teacher asks many open-ended questions that require students to communicate more complex ideas. The teacher often extends or repeats student responses. Frequently, the teacher maps his or her actions and student actions descriptively and uses advanced language with students.

Instructional Dialogue

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4 – 12

Instructional Dialogue captures the purposeful use of content-focused discussion among teachers and students that is cumulative, with the teacher supporting students to chain ideas together in ways that lead to deeper understanding of content. Students take an active role in these dialogues, and both the teacher and students use strategies that facilitate extended dialogue (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 97, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 101).

Table 15. Instructional Dialogue: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Instructional Dialogue District Average*: 2.9

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	40	2.9
Grades 4-5**	4	2	3	0	0	1	0	10	2.3
Grades 6-8	3	5	2	3	1	0	0	14	2.6
Grades 9-12	3	3	0	5	3	1	1	16	3.6

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 15, the district average is computed as: ([1 x 10] + [2 x 10] + [3 x 5] + [4 x 8] + [5 x 4] + [6 x 2] + [7 x 1]) ÷ 40 observations = 2.9

**Instructional Dialogue does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, there are no or few discussions in the class, the discussions are not related to content or skill development, or the discussions contain only simple question-response exchanges between the teacher and students. The class is dominated by teacher talk, and discussion is limited. The teacher and students ask closed-ended questions; rarely acknowledge, report, or extend other students' comments; and/or appear disinterested in other students' comments, resulting in many students not being engaged in instructional dialogues.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At this range, there are occasional content-based discussions in class among teachers and students; however, these exchanges are brief or quickly move from one topic to another without follow-up questions or comments from the teacher and other students. The class is mostly dominated by teacher talk, although there are times when students take a more active role, or there are distributed dialogues that involve only a few students in the class. The teacher and students sometimes facilitate and encourage more elaborate dialogue, but such efforts are brief, inconsistent, or ineffective at consistently engaging students in extended dialogues.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, there are frequent, content-driven discussions in the class between teachers and students or among students. The discussions build depth of knowledge through cumulative, contingent exchanges. The class dialogues are distributed in a way that the teacher and the majority of students take an active role or students are actively engaged in instructional dialogues with each other. The teacher and students frequently use strategies that encourage more elaborate dialogue, such as open-ended questions, repetition or extension, and active listening. Students respond to these techniques by fully participating in extended dialogues.

Student Engagement

Student Engagement domain, Grades 4–12

Student Engagement refers to the extent to which all students in the class are focused and participating in the learning activity that is presented or facilitated by the teacher. The difference between passive engagement and active engagement is reflected in this rating (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 105).

Table 16. Student Engagement: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Student Engagement District Average*: 4.8

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	40	4.8
Grades 4-5**	0	0	1	2	3	3	1	10	5.1
Grades 6-8	0	0	2	7	3	1	1	14	4.4
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	4	8	4	0	16	5.0

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 16, the district average is computed as: ([3 x 3] + [4 x 13] + [5 x 14] + [6 x 8] + [7 x 2]) ÷ 40 observations = 4.8

**Student Engagement does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. In the low range, the majority of students appear distracted or disengaged.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In the middle range, students are passively engaged, listening to or watching the teacher; student engagement is mixed, with the majority of students actively engaged for part of the time and disengaged for the rest of the time; or there is a mix of student engagement, with some students actively engaged and some students disengaged.

Ratings in the High Range. In the high range, most students are actively engaged in the classroom discussions and activities.

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades K–5

Table 17. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades K–5

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Emotional Support Domain	**0**	**7**	**17**	**14**	**25**	**21**	**36**	**120**	**5.2**
Positive Climate	0	0	3	6	8	11	2	30	5.1
Negative Climate**	0	0	0	0	1	1	28	30	6.9
Teacher Sensitivity	0	2	2	2	10	8	6	30	5.3
Regard for Student Perspectives	0	5	12	6	6	1	0	30	3.5
Classroom Organization Domain	**0**	**1**	**2**	**11**	**11**	**25**	**40**	**90**	**6.0**
Behavior Management	0	0	0	1	1	8	20	30	6.6
Productivity	0	0	0	1	2	9	18	30	6.5
Instructional Learning Formats***	0	1	2	9	8	8	2	30	4.9
Instructional Support Domain	**8**	**29**	**27**	**15**	**12**	**8**	**1**	**100**	**3.2**
Concept Development (K-3 only)	0	8	2	7	1	2	0	20	3.4
Content Understanding (UE only)	0	0	5	1	2	2	0	10	4.1
Analysis and Inquiry (UE only)	1	6	1	1	0	1	0	10	2.6
Quality of Feedback	3	6	12	3	3	2	1	30	3.2
Language Modeling (K-3 only)	0	7	4	3	6	0	0	20	3.4
Instructional Dialogue (UE only)	4	2	3	0	0	1	0	10	2.3
Student Engagement (UE only)	**0**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**3**	**1**	**10**	**5.1**

*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([3 x 3] + [4 x 6] + [5 x 8] + [6 x 11] + [7 x 2]) ÷ 30 observations = 5.1

**Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: ([5 x 1] + [6 x 1] + [7 x 28]) ÷ 30 observations = 6.9. In addition, Negative Climate appears in the Classroom Organization Domain for the Upper Elementary Manual.

***Instructional Learning Formats appears in the Instructional Support Domain for the Upper Elementary Manual.

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 6–8

Table 18. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades 6–8

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Emotional Support Domain	**1**	**2**	**18**	**7**	**11**	**3**	**0**	**42**	**3.8**
Positive Climate	0	0	5	3	5	1	0	14	4.1
Teacher Sensitivity	0	0	4	3	6	1	0	14	4.3
Regard for Student Perspectives	1	2	9	1	0	1	0	14	3.0
Classroom Organization Domain	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**38**	**42**	**6.9**
Behavior Management	0	0	0	0	0	1	13	14	6.9
Productivity	0	0	0	0	1	2	11	14	6.7
Negative Climate**	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	14	7.0
Instructional Support Domain	**9**	**17**	**17**	**14**	**9**	**4**	**0**	**70**	**3.1**
Instructional Learning Formats	0	0	1	6	5	2	0	14	4.6
Content Understanding	0	3	7	2	2	0	0	14	3.2
Analysis and Inquiry	4	6	3	0	0	1	0	14	2.2
Quality of Feedback	2	3	4	3	1	1	0	14	3.1
Instructional Dialogue	3	5	2	3	1	0	0	14	2.6
Student Engagement	**0**	**0**	**2**	**7**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**14**	**4.4**

*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([3 x 5] + [4 x 3] + [5 x 5] + [6 x 1]) ÷ 14 observations = 4.1

**Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: ([7 x 14]) ÷ 14 observations = 7.0

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 9–12

Table 19. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades 9–12

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Emotional Support Domain	**1**	**0**	**5**	**17**	**4**	**9**	**12**	**48**	**5.0**
Positive Climate	0	0	2	5	1	5	3	16	5.1
Teacher Sensitivity	1	0	0	4	2	3	6	16	5.4
Regard for Student Perspectives	0	0	3	8	1	1	3	16	4.6
Classroom Organization Domain	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**11**	**34**	**48**	**6.6**
Behavior Management	0	0	0	0	0	5	11	16	6.7
Productivity	0	0	0	1	1	5	9	16	6.4
Negative Climate**	0	0	0	0	1	1	14	16	6.8
Instructional Support Domain	**8**	**7**	**11**	**17**	**21**	**12**	**4**	**80**	**4.1**
Instructional Learning Formats	0	0	1	3	8	3	1	16	5.0
Content Understanding	0	0	1	5	5	3	2	16	5.0
Analysis and Inquiry	3	2	4	1	2	4	0	16	3.6
Quality of Feedback	2	2	5	3	3	1	0	16	3.4
Instructional Dialogue	3	3	0	5	3	1	1	16	3.6
Student Engagement	**0**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**8**	**4**	**0**	**16**	**5.0**

*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([3 x 2] + [4 x 5] + [5 x 1] + [6 x 5] + [7 x 3]) ÷ 16 observations = 5.1

**Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: ([5 x 1] + [6 x 1] + [7 x 14]) ÷ 16 observations = 6.8

References

Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning. (n.d.). *Measuring and improving teacher-student interactions in PK−12 settings to enhance students' learning*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia. Retrieved from http://www.teachstone.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/class-mtp-pk-12-brief.pdf

MET Project. (2010). *The CLASS protocol for classroom observations*. Seattle, WA: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Retrieved from http://metproject.org/resources/CLASS_10_29_10.pdf

Pianta, R. C., Hamre, B. K., & Mintz, S. (2012). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Manual, Secondary.* Charlottesville, VA: Teachstone.

Pianta, R. C., Hamre, B. K., & Mintz, S. (2012). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Manual, Upper Elementary.* Charlottesville, VA: Teachstone.

Pianta, R. C., La Paro, K. M., & Hamre, B. K. (2008). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Manual, K−3.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Appendix C. Resources to Support Implementation of DESE's District Standards and Indicators

Table C1. Resources to Support Leadership and Governance

Resource	Description
Transforming School Funding: A Guide to Implementing Student-Based Budgeting (SBB) from Education Resource Strategies	This guide describes a process to help districts tie funding to specific student needs.
Principal Induction and Mentoring Handbook	This series of modules is designed to support novice principals and their mentors in the development of antiracist leadership competencies aligned to the Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership.
Coherence Guidebook	This guidebook illustrates a systems-level path toward deeper learning. School system leaders and teams may use the guidebook, along with its companion self-assessment, to articulate a vision of deeper learning, identify high-leverage instructional priorities, refine tiered supports, and leverage systems and structures—all in service of the articulated vision.

Table C2. Resources to Support Human Resources and Professional Development

Resource	Description
Educator Evaluation Implementation Resources	A suite of resources and practical tools that reflect feedback from educators on how to implement educator evaluation in support of more equitable, culturally responsive schools and classrooms for all. These resources include Focus Indicators, a subset of indicators from the Classroom Teacher and School Level Administrator Rubrics that represent high-priority practices for the 2022-2023 school year.
Guide to Building Supportive Talent Systems	Resources, considerations, and updates for recruiting, hiring, evaluating, and supporting educators and school staff, with a focus on racial equity.
Professional Learning Partner Guide	A free, online, searchable list of vetted professional development providers who have expertise in specific sets of high-quality instructional materials. Schools and districts can use this guide to easily find professional development providers to support the launch or implementation of high-quality instructional materials.

Table C3. Resources to Support Financial and Asset Management

Resource	Description
Spending Money Wisely: Getting the Most From School District Budgets (scroll down to Research section)	A discussion of the top 10 opportunities for districts to realign resources and free up funds to support strategic priorities.
Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR)	RADAR is a suite of innovative data reports, case studies, and other resources that provide a new approach to resource decisions.
Planning for Success (PfS)	PfS is an inclusive, hands-on planning process designed to build district and school capacity and coherence while also building community understanding and support.
DESE spending comparisons website	A clearinghouse of school finance data reports and other resources available to district users and the public.

Appendix D. Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures

Table D1. Westport Community Schools: Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, 2022-2023

Group	District	Percentage of total	State	Percentage of total
All	1,446	100.0%	913,735	100.0%
African American	15	1.0%	85,662	9.4%
Asian	11	0.8%	67,010	7.3%
Hispanic	70	4.8%	221,044	24.2%
Native American	2	0.1%	2,155	0.2%
White	1,300	89.9%	496,800	54.4%
Native Hawaiian	0	0.0%	787	0.1%
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic	48	3.3%	40,277	4.4%

Note. As of October 1, 2022.

Table D2. Westport Community Schools: 2022-2023 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations

Group	District			State		
	N	Percentage of high needs	Percentage of district	N	Percentage of high needs	Percentage of state
All students with high needs	677	100.0%	46.4%	508,820	100.0%	55.1%
Students with disabilities	298	44.0%	20.4%	179,095	35.2%	19.4%
Low income	499	73.7%	34.5%	386,060	75.9%	42.3%
ELs and former ELs	24	3.5%	1.7%	110,554	21.7%	12.1%

Note. As of October 1, 2022. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 1,459; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 923,349.

Table D3. Westport Public Schools: Chronic Absence[a] Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022

Group	*N* (2022)	2020	2021	2022	State (2022)
All students	1,480	11.9	15.8	23.6	27.7
African American/Black	14	14.3	25.0	14.3	32.0
Asian	13	0.0	0.0	15.4	15.4
Hispanic/Latino	71	15.4	24.1	32.4	42.3
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	55	16.1	24.1	27.3	28.4
Native American	1	--	--	--	37.8
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	32.1
White	1,326	11.6	15.1	23.2	22.1
High needs	737	20.3	27.1	30.4	37.1
Low income[a]	575	--	--	33.4	40.6
ELs	21	23.1	41.2	42.9	39.9
Students w/disabilities	307	20.4	24.0	30.9	36.9

[a] The percentage of students absent 10 percent or more of their total number of student days of membership in a school.

Table D4. Westport Community Schools: Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years, 2020-2022

	Fiscal year 2020		Fiscal year 2021		Fiscal year 2022	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools						
By school committee	$18,781,131	$18,688,394	$18,590,895	$19,098,059	$19,935,683	$20,064,051
By municipality	$7,144,819	$16,386,992	$7,682,678	$24,310,865	$9,696,080	$16,686,097
Total from local appropriations	$25,925,950	$35,075,386	$26,273,573	$43,408,924	$29,631,763	$36,750,148
From revolving funds and grants	–	$1,893,285	–	$2,649,561	–	$4,231,486
Total expenditures	–	$36,968,671	–	$46,058,485	–	$40,981,634
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid[a]	–	$4,559,462	–	$4,559,462	–	$4,603,592
Required local contribution	–	$13,146,344	–	$13,742,991	–	$14,017,303
Required net school spending[b]	–	$17,705,806	–	$18,302,453	–	$18,620,895
Actual net school spending	–	$22,053,633	–	$22,257,955	–	$23,281,483
Over/under required ($)	–	$4,347,827	–	$3,955,502	–	$4,660,588
Over/under required (%)	–	24.6%	–	21.6%	–	25.0%

Note. Data as of June 1, 2022, and sourced from fiscal year 2022 district end-of-year reports and Chapter 70 program information on DESE website.

[a] Chapter 70 state aid funds are deposited in the local general fund and spent as local appropriations. [b] Required net school spending is the total of Chapter 70 aid and required local contribution. Net school spending includes only expenditures from local appropriations, not revolving funds, and grants. It includes expenditures for most administration, instruction, operations, and out-of-district tuitions. It does not include transportation, school lunches, debt, or capital.

Table D5. Westport Community Schools: Expenditures Per In-District Pupil, Fiscal Years 2020–2022

Expenditure category	2020	2021	2022
Administration	$615	$677	$731
Instructional leadership (district and school)	$853	$890	$902
Teachers	$6,568	$6,879	$6,734
Other teaching services	$1,759	$2,046	$2,009
Professional development	$95	$70	$71
Instructional materials, equipment, and technology	$441	$381	$487
Guidance, counseling and testing services	$565	$594	$616
Pupil services	$1,564	$1,814	$1,988
Operations and maintenance	$1,134	$1,263	$1,464
Insurance, retirement, and other fixed costs	$2,451	$2,449	$2,578
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	$16,045	$17,063	$17,581

Note. Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding. Data are from per-pupil-exp.xlsx (live.com).

Appendix E. Student Performance Data

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the 2020-2021 and 2021-22 school years. Data reported in this appendix may have been affected by the pandemic. Please keep this in mind when reviewing the data and take particular care when comparing data across multiple school years.

Table E1. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2019-2022

Group	N (2022)	Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
All	730	54	45	37	41	5	13	14	17
African American/Black	5	--	--	--	26	--	--	--	27
Asian	3	--	--	--	63	--	--	--	8
Hispanic/Latino	31	42	52	26	22	8	24	26	31
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	26	43	27	27	48	9	20	27	14
Native American	1	--	--	--	29	--	--	--	25
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	43	--	--	--	17
White	664	54	46	38	48	5	13	13	11
High needs	347	36	28	25	24	13	28	26	28
Low income[a]	258	--	--	29	24	--	--	19	28
ELs and former ELs	20	38	36	20	20	19	29	35	34
Students w/disabilities	150	18	12	13	11	27	46	47	46

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E2. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2019-2022

Group	N (2022)	Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
All	81	64	75	58	58	6	4	7	8
African American/Black	2	--	--	--	41	--	--	--	13
Asian	1	--	--	--	79	--	--	--	4
Hispanic/Latino	4	--	--	--	38	--	--	--	17
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	3	--	--	--	62	--	--	--	6
Native American	--	--	--	--	53	--	--	--	8
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	45	--	--	--	16
White	71	64	75	56	65	6	5	7	4
High needs	30	27	56	27	38	23	12	20	15
Low income[a]	27	--	--	30	40	--	--	22	14
ELs and former ELs	1	--	--	--	21	--	--	--	30
Students w/disabilities	15	0	--	0	20	50	--	40	26

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E3. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2019-2022

Group	N (2022)	Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
All	732	53	37	39	39	7	14	12	17
African American/Black	5	--	--	--	19	--	--	--	31
Asian	3	--	--	--	69	--	--	--	6
Hispanic/Latino	31	38	34	23	18	4	21	19	32
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	26	24	13	19	44	12	26	19	16
Native American	1	--	--	--	27	--	--	--	23
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	39	--	--	--	19
White	666	55	39	40	47	7	13	11	11
High needs	350	33	20	25	22	17	29	21	28
Low income[a]	261	--	--	28	20	--	--	18	29
ELs and former ELs	19	38	29	21	21	6	29	5	32
Students w/disabilities	151	14	12	11	12	30	47	38	45

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E4. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2019-2022

Group	N (2022)	Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
All	81	49	54	49	50	13	9	5	10
African American/Black	2	--	--	--	26	--	--	--	20
Asian	1	--	--	--	78	--	--	--	4
Hispanic/Latino	4	--	--	--	26	--	--	--	21
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	3	--	--	--	53	--	--	--	10
Native American	--	--	--	--	37	--	--	--	16
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	48	--	--	--	19
White	71	49	55	49	59	14	10	4	6
High needs	30	23	32	23	28	45	24	13	19
Low income[a]	27	--	--	26	29	--	--	15	19
ELs and former ELs	1	--	--	--	17	--	--	--	32
Students w/disabilities	15	0	--	0	15	80	--	27	33

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E5. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Student Group, Grades 5 and 8, 2019-2022

Group	N (2022)	Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
All	233	56	50	52	42	7	13	9	18
African American/Black	1	--	--	--	21	--	--	--	31
Asian	1	--	--	--	65	--	--	--	8
Hispanic/Latino	9	--	36	--	20	--	36	--	33
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	9	55	40	--	48	9	0	--	15
Native American	--	--	--	--	28	--	--	--	25
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	41	--	--	--	20
White	213	56	51	53	52	5	12	9	10
High needs	107	46	32	38	24	14	24	14	29
Low income[a]	83	--	--	43	23	--	--	11	30
ELs and former ELs	4	--	--	--	18	--	--	--	37
Students w/disabilities	44	31	18	18	15	25	38	25	44

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E6. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2019-2022

Group	N (2022)	Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
All	72	--	--	53	47	--	--	11	14
African American/Black	1	--	--	--	25	--	--	--	25
Asian	--	--	--	--	70	--	--	--	6
Hispanic/Latino	3	--	--	--	23	--	--	--	28
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	3	--	--	--	51	--	--	--	12
Native American	--	--	--	--	38	--	--	--	14
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	45	--	--	--	23
White	65	--	--	55	56	--	--	11	8
High needs	25	--	--	20	26	--	--	28	24
Low income[a]	22	--	--	23	26	--	--	27	25
ELs and former ELs	1	--	--	--	13	--	--	--	43
Students w/disabilities	14	--	--	0	16	--	--	50	37

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E7. Westport Public Schools: ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile in Grades 3-8, 2019 & 2022

Group	N (2022)	2019	2022	State (2022)
All students	545	48.7	48.3	49.8
African American/Black	4	--	--	48.8
Asian	2	--	--	58.5
Hispanic/Latino	21	48.4	38.6	46.5
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	18	46.7	--	51.5
Native American	1	--	--	46.2
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	51.7
White	499	48.7	48.4	50.0
High needs	256	45.5	43.9	46.7
Low income[a]	194	--	45.0	46.5
ELs and former ELs	15	--	--	47.7
Students w/disabilities	102	45.7	43.4	41.8

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E8. Westport Public Schools: ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile in Grade 10, 2019 & 2022

Group	N (2022)	2019	2022	State (2022)
All students	73	48.2	56.7	50.0
African American/Black	2	--	--	49.8
Asian	1	--	--	56.0
Hispanic/Latino	3	--	--	47.6
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	3	--	--	50.6
Native American	--	--	--	54.1
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	49.5
White	64	48.1	57.0	50.1
High needs	25	--	39.2	47.7
Low income[a]	22	--	39.4	47.2
ELs and former ELs	1	--	--	50.5
Students w/disabilities	11	--	--	45.1

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E9. Westport Public Schools: Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile in Grades 3-8, 2019 & 2022

Group	N (2022)	2019	2022	State (2022)
All students	548	50.9	48.2	49.9
African American/Black	4	--	--	47.0
Asian	2	--	--	59.8
Hispanic/Latino	21	45.4	45.5	46.4
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	18	42.4	--	51.0
Native American	1	--	--	49.5
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	49.9
White	502	51.6	47.9	50.4
High needs	258	46.9	45.9	47.1
Low income[a]	196	--	47.1	46.4
ELs and former ELs	14	--	--	48.6
Students w/disabilities	102	44.8	41.0	43.3

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E10. Westport Public Schools: Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile in Grade 10, 2019 & 2022

Group	*N* (2022)	2019	2022	State (2022)
All students	73	35.6	46.4	50.0
African American/Black	2	--	--	45.6
Asian	1	--	--	57.3
Hispanic/Latino	3	--	--	44.4
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	3	--	--	50.0
Native American	--	--	--	46.6
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	41.2
White	64	35.5	48.0	51.6
High needs	25	--	43.6	46.7
Low income^a	22	--	41.1	45.6
ELs and former ELs	1	--	--	48.9
Students w/disabilities	11	--	--	47.3

^a Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E11. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Grade, 2019-2022

Grade	*N* (2022)	Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
3	115	53	52	39	44	3	8	13	15
4	112	54	57	35	38	4	8	15	16
5	116	46	45	30	41	5	12	9	13
6	133	54	47	30	41	5	20	19	22
7	138	49	31	49	41	8	18	13	19
8	116	65	38	39	42	7	13	14	18
3-8	730	54	45	37	41	5	13	14	17
10	81	64	75	58	58	6	4	7	8

Table E12. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Grade, 2019-2022

Grade	N (2022)	Percentages meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
3	115	49	40	34	41	9	20	13	20
4	112	39	47	47	42	6	8	9	17
5	116	48	45	35	36	9	13	14	16
6	134	54	25	25	42	4	19	17	15
7	141	61	34	48	37	10	9	9	19
8	114	65	36	43	36	4	12	8	17
3-8	732	53	37	39	39	7	14	12	17
10	81	49	54	49	50	13	9	5	10

Table E13. Westport Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Grade, 2019-2022

Grade	N (2022)	Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations				Percentage not meeting expectations			
		2019	2021	2022	State (2022)	2019	2021	2022	State (2022)
5	117	58	58	54	43	7	10	9	18
8	116	54	39	49	42	6	16	9	18
5 and 8	233	56	50	52	42	7	13	9	18
10	72	--	--	53	47	--	--	11	14

Note. Grade 10 results for the spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about the Competency Determination requirements is available at https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html. In 2019, 10th graders took the Legacy MCAS science test.

Table E14. Westport Public Schools: ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Grade, 2019 & 2022

Grade	N (2022)	2019	2022	State (2022)
3	--	--	--	--
4	91	44.9	51.9	50.0
5	103	40.5	36.4	49.9
6	124	46.4	43.0	49.8
7	126	52.7	53.4	49.7
8	101	57.9	57.4	49.7
3-8	545	48.7	48.3	49.8
10	73	48.2	56.7	50.0

Table E15. Westport Public Schools: Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Grade, 2019 & 2022

Grade	N (2022)	2019	2022	State (2022)
3	--	--	--	--
4	91	41.1	50.6	50.0
5	104	38.8	30.2	50.0
6	125	44.2	24.0	49.8
7	128	57.6	71.3	49.9
8	100	71.6	65.5	49.8
3-8	548	50.9	48.2	49.9
10	73	35.6	46.4	50.0

Table E16. Westport Public Schools: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022

Group	N (2022)	2020	2021	2022	State (2022)
All students	75	89.1	87.0	89.3	90.1
African American/Black	--	--	--	--	86.2
Asian	1	--	--	--	96.2
Hispanic/Latino	1	--	--	--	81.2
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	2	--	--	--	88.7
Native American	--	--	--	--	82.2
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	81.3
White	71	88.0	86.4	88.7	93.2
High needs	39	88.5	74.5	79.5	83.9
Low income[a]	32	87.0	78.9	81.3	83.2
ELs	--	--	--	--	73.1
Students w/disabilities	12	72.7	60.0	66.7	78.0

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E17. Westport Public Schools: Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2019-2021

Group	N (2021)	2019	2020	2021	State (2021)
All students	92	95.9	90.9	87.0	91.8
African American/Black	--	--	--	--	88.1
Asian	1	--	--	--	97.0
Hispanic/Latino	--	--	--	--	84.0
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	2	--	--	--	91.2
Native American	1	--	--	--	84.1
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	87.7
White	88	95.5	90.0	86.4	94.4
High needs	47	90.2	92.3	74.5	85.8
Low income[a]	38	89.5	91.3	78.9	85.1
ELs	1	--	--	--	78.0
Students w/disabilities	20	84.6	81.8	60.0	80.6

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E18. Westport Public Schools: In-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022

Group	N (2022)	2020	2021	2022	State (2022)
All students	1,479	--	--	3.2	1.6
African American/Black	14	--	--	--	2.2
Asian	13	--	--	--	0.4
Hispanic/Latino	72	--	--	--	2.1
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	55	--	--	9.1	1.8
Native American	1	--	--	--	2.4
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	--	--	--	1.9
White	1,324	--	--	3.0	1.4
High needs	739	--	--	4.9	2.2
Low income[a]	578	--	--	5.2	2.3
ELs	22	--	--	--	1.4
Students w/disabilities	307	--	--	5.9	2.8

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E19. Westport Public Schools: Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022

Group	N (2022)	2020	2021	2022	State (2022)
All students	1,479	--	--	1.7	3.1
African American/Black	14	--	--	--	6.2
Asian	13	--	--	--	0.7
Hispanic/Latino	72	--	--	--	4.9
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	55	--	--	1.8	3.5
Native American	1	--	--	--	4.3
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	--	--	--	3.6
White	1,324	--	--	1.7	2.1
High needs	739	--	--	2.6	4.6
Low income[a]	578	--	--	2.8	5.2
ELs	22	--	--	--	3.5
Students w/disabilities	307	--	--	3.3	5.8

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E20. Westport Public Schools: Dropout Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022

Group	N (2022)	2020	2021	2022	State (2022)
All students	316	1.4	3.1	2.2	2.1
African American/Black	3	--	--	--	2.8
Asian	6	--	--	0.0	0.6
Hispanic/Latino	13	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.3
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	13	0.0	0.0	7.7	2.4
Native American	--	--	--	--	4.3
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	1.2
White	281	1.5	3.4	2.1	1.3
High needs	121	1.9	6.8	5.0	3.6
Low income[a]	99	1.3	4.4	6.1	3.8
ELs	1	--	--	--	7.8
Students w/disabilities	43	2.3	12.5		3.4

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.

Table E21. Westport Public Schools: Advanced Coursework Completion Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022

Group	N (2022)	2020	2021	2022	State (2022)
All students	137	65.0	68.8	56.2	64.9
African American/Black	--	--	--	--	55.5
Asian	3	--	--	--	84.9
Hispanic/Latino	4	--	--	--	49.2
Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino	5	--	--	--	66.1
Native American	--	--	--	--	50.0
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	65.4
White	125	64.1	69.9	56.0	69.5
High needs	53	35.4	46.4	37.7	49.1
Low income[a]	43	44.4	51.2	41.9	50.1
ELs	1	--	--	--	30.0
Students w/disabilities	16	9.5	16.7	25.0	34.3

[a] Since fall 2021, DESE no longer reports data for the economically disadvantaged student group and instead reports data for a newly defined low-income student group. This change also affects the high needs group.