

**DISTRICT STANDARDS AND INDICATORS**

Contents

[Introduction 3](#_Toc172031366)

[Statutory and Regulatory Context 3](#_Toc172031367)

[Leadership and Governance 5](#_Toc172031368)

[Leadership and Governing Structures 5](#_Toc172031369)

[Strategic Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring 7](#_Toc172031370)

[District Culture 9](#_Toc172031371)

[Curriculum and Instruction 10](#_Toc172031372)

[Instructional Leadership 10](#_Toc172031373)

[Curriculum and Instructional Materials 10](#_Toc172031374)

[Equitable Practices and Access 11](#_Toc172031375)

[Effective Instruction and Curricular Implementation 12](#_Toc172031376)

[Assessment 14](#_Toc172031377)

[Data Collection 14](#_Toc172031378)

[Data Use and Culture 14](#_Toc172031379)

[Sharing Data 15](#_Toc172031380)

[Human Resources and Professional Development 17](#_Toc172031381)

[Human Resources Infrastructure, Policies, and Practices 17](#_Toc172031382)

[Staffing 18](#_Toc172031383)

[Professional Learning 20](#_Toc172031384)

[Student Support 22](#_Toc172031385)

[Safe and Supportive School Climate and Culture 22](#_Toc172031386)

[Health and Wellbeing 23](#_Toc172031387)

[Family and Community Partnerships 24](#_Toc172031388)

[Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) 25](#_Toc172031389)

[Financial and Asset Management 26](#_Toc172031390)

[Business Office Staffing and Infrastructure 26](#_Toc172031391)

[Budgeting and Budget Process 26](#_Toc172031392)

[Operations 28](#_Toc172031393)

[Managing Capital Assets and Capital Planning 29](#_Toc172031394)

[Glossary 30](#_Toc172031395)

Introduction

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) [envisions an education system](https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/vision/vision-supports.pdf) in which all students will attain academic knowledge and skills, understand the value of self and others, and engage with the world so they can be curious and creative, shape their path, feel connected, and be empowered. The *District Standards and Indicators* provide a detailed definition of effective school district policies and practices that will assist school districts in implementing this vision.

Furthermore, this document is the foundation of all [district reviews](https://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/district-review/default.html) conducted by the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring, which provide the state, district leaders, and the public with an in-depth look into the systems, structures, and practices of a district and how they affect student experiences and opportunities.

The Department’s three [Strategic Objectives](https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/vision/vision-supports.pdf) (*Whole Student*, *Deeper Learning*, and *Diverse and Effective Workforce*) are embedded throughout the standards and indicators. These priorities inform DESE’s work throughout the Commonwealth and were designed based on research, insights from school and district officials, and feedback from key stakeholders. This document aligns with other DESE guidance and contains links to relevant guidance and resources.

The Department acknowledges the unique contexts within which each district operates and recognizes the diversity in size, location, and resources. Districts range from small to large, are situated in rural, suburban, or urban areas, and have varying levels of funding and staffing. However, the standards, indicators, and look-fors are crafted to be adaptable and relevant to all districts. This flexibility ensures that every district, irrespective of its specific circumstances, can use the document to assess its systems, policies, and practices.

# Statutory and Regulatory Context

The *District Standards and Indicators* fulfill the statutory requirement described under [M.G.L. Ch. 69 § 1B](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter69/Section1b): “The board shall establish the process and standards for school and district audits and reviews conducted by the office of school and district accountability established by section 55A of chapter 15.” Theyare also referenced in [state regulations (603 CMR 2.03 (6))](https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr2.html?section=03):

*(a) District reviews, improvement planning, and other forms of accountability and assistance shall be based on standards of effective policy and practice in:*

1. *Leadership and governance;*
2. *Curriculum and instruction;*
3. *Assessment;*
4. *Human resources and professional development;*
5. *Student support; and*
6. *Financial and asset management.*

*(b) The Department shall publish a detailed version of the standards and associated indicators, which shall be informed by research-based practices identified as characteristic of schools that have experienced rapid improvements in student outcomes.*

The figure below outlines the six standards and 21 indicators, which are described in detail throughout the remainder of this document.



# Leadership and Governance

School committees, district leaders, school leaders, and advisory council members work collaboratively and strategically to promote high-quality teaching and learning that is antiracist, inclusive, multilingual, and multicultural; that values and affirms each student and their families; and that creates equitable opportunities and experiences for all students, particularly those who have been historically underserved. They establish, implement, and evaluate policies, plans, procedures, systems, and budgets with a primary focus on achieving districtwide strategic objectives, in part through equitable and effective use of resources, that ultimately lead to high-quality teaching and learning for all students.

Leadership and Governing Structures**:** The district has a clear leadership and governance structure in which individuals and teams carry out their roles to support district functions and advance equitable student outcomes.

1. **School Committee:** The district has a school committee with a working governance structure that fulfills its statutory responsibilities, sets educational district goals, and advances policies and programs that provide all students, particularly those from historically underserved groups and communities, with equitable opportunities to excel in all areas across all grades.
	1. The school committee has systems in place for reviewing and approving policies that are consistent with statutory and regulatory requirements, district priorities, and the statewide priorities established by the Board and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
		1. The school committee regularly reviews its policies, with an eye towards identifying and addressing systemic issues that have historically contributed to disparities.
		2. The school committee, with the district’s support, leverages an array of data, including disaggregated student performance and demographic data and stakeholder feedback during the policy review process to assess the effects of proposed policies.
		3. The school committee maintains a publicly available repository (e.g., website) with all policies, follows up with district administrators to confirm decisions are being meaningfully implemented in schools and classrooms, and frequently updates policies to maintain compliance with laws and regulations.
	2. The school committee hires, supervises, and conducts an annual performance review of the superintendent, in alignment with the [Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/), and provides ongoing, growth-oriented feedback to improve the superintendent’s performance.
	3. The school committee strategically aligns resource allocations (e.g., funding, personnel, and time) to both improve student learning experiences and outcomes and reduce disparities for historically underserved groups.
		1. The school committee promotes prudent financial management by working with district leaders and the municipality to annually approve the district’s budget that is aligned with district priorities, and regularly review reports so that spending remains within the approved budget (see [Financial and Asset Management](#_Financial_and_Asset)).
		2. The school committee explicitly connects its resource allocations to the district’s strategic goals and supports the implementation of evidence-based practices.
		3. The school committee has systems in place to regularly analyze its allocations through an equity lens that focuses on the learning experiences and outcomes of students from historically underserved groups, their families, and their communities.
	4. The school committee serves as the employer of record for both unionized and non-collectively bargained staff.
		1. The school committee negotiates collective bargaining agreements with its unions to develop and sustain a workforce that is diverse, culturally responsive, and well-prepared, so that all students have equitable access to effective educators.
		2. The school committee sets pay ranges and upholds fair compensation standards for non-collectively bargained employees.
	5. The school committee effectively manages communication with the public and has systems for effective stakeholder engagement, including public comment and written communications.
		1. The school committee proactively seeks representation and input from all relevant communities, especially historically underserved communities, on proposed policies and initiatives.
		2. The school committee’s communications are translated into the languages of the community and formatted for clarity and cohesion.
	6. The school committee includes one non-voting student member, who is the elected chair of the high school’s elected student advisory council.
2. **District Leadership Team:** The superintendent establishes and leads an effective leadership teaming structure that attends to strategic planning, resource allocation, implementation, professional development, and monitoring for both instruction and operations.
	1. The district leadership team includes individuals with a range of experience and expertise (e.g., academics; student support; diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); special education; family engagement; supporting multilingual learners; and school and district finance) who lead the district in implementing its instructional vision.
	2. The superintendent, with the support of the district leadership team, advises and makes recommendations to the school committee for sound educational policies and practices, including proposals that support historically underserved student groups.
	3. Based on the district’s budget, as established by the school committee, the district leadership team has the authority to make resource, scheduling, programmatic, and staffing decisions that create conditions for students to regularly engage in the district’s instructional vision.
	4. The district leadership team meets regularly to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the district.
3. **School Leadership Teams:** The district supports every school in establishing a diverse and representative team of leaders that implements policies, programs, and practices that advance school priorities and are aligned with the district’s instructional vision and strategic goals (see [Strategic Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring](#One)).
	1. The district supports school leadership teams in promoting an inclusive environment in which all students and families are known and valued (see [Student Support](#_Student_Support)).
	2. The district empowers school leaders to develop a collaborative and constructive learning culture among their staff and students (see [Human Resources and Professional Development](#_Human_Resources_and)).
	3. The district equips school leaders with the necessary staffing, scheduling, and budgeting autonomies to implement evidence-based strategies, enable teachers to promote relevant, real-world, and interactive learning experiences, and provide individualized supports so that students can excel at grade-level or beyond (see [Curriculum and Instruction](#_Curriculum_and_Instruction)).
	4. The district models and develops structures for school leadership teams to regularly monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools through strategies including coaching, collaboration time, professional development, and other instructional supports (see [Human Resources and Professional Development](#_Human_Resources_and)).
4. **School and Parent Advisory Councils:** The district and schools support the convening of required representative [School Councils](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter69/Section1i), a districtwide [Special Education Parental Advisory Council (SEPAC),](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71B/Section3) and – for districts serving 100 or more English learners – an [English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC).](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71A/Section6A)
	1. The district sets expectations around the formation of diverse and inclusive councils.
	2. The district supports school leaders in convening councils that assist in the review of school-level resources and improvement plans, and advocate for the experiences of historically underserved groups and communities.

Strategic Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring**:** The district grounds its work in a clear vision for student learning and advances this vision through strategic planning practices, systematic implementation, and progress monitoring.

1. **District Mission/Vision:** The district develops and disseminates a meaningful mission and/or vision statement based on staff, student, family, and community input that reflects DESE’s [Educational Vision](https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/vision/vision-supports.pdf).
2. **District Planning:** The district develops an evidence-based three-year District Improvement Plan (often referred to as a strategic plan) and a Student Opportunity Act plan that drive the development, implementation, and modification of educational programs and practices so that students attain academic knowledge and skills, understand and value self and others, and engage with the world.
	1. District plans are aligned and demonstrate coherence across district initiatives and:
		1. Reflect the district’s mission and/or vision.
		2. Include strategic priorities and related goals, benchmarks, resources, and evidence-based strategies for improving opportunities and outcomes for all students.
		3. Are grounded in equity and closing gaps for all students, especially those experiencing the greatest disparities in opportunities and outcomes.
		4. Are based on analysis of current and historical disaggregated student and educator data.
		5. Incorporate feedback, goals, and findings issued by other DESE monitoring, review, and/or support teams.
		6. Commit to continuous improvement.
		7. Inform annual district action plans and school improvement plans.
		8. Identify specific actions adults can take to embed the district’s mission and/or vision in their work.
	2. The district has a process for the development, implementation, and review of its plans that includes all relevant stakeholders and provides opportunities to offer meaningful feedback (see [Stakeholder Engagement](#Two)).
	3. The district regularly reviews its plans using disaggregated data and stakeholder feedback and identifies action steps that support plan implementation, reference relevant metrics, and set benchmarks to assess progress toward identified goals.
3. **School Improvement Planning:** The principal of each school, in consultation with its School Council, develops a [School Improvement Plan](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter69/Section1i).
	1. The district has a clear process in place for guiding the development of and providing feedback on School Improvement Plans so that they align with the district’s plan.
	2. School Improvement Plans emphasize instructional priorities and related strategies aimed at reducing disparities in student opportunities and outcomes.
4. **Implementation and Progress Monitoring:** District and school leaders act upon existing plans and have formal processes in place to assess implementation and success and communicate progress with their communities.
	1. District and school leadership teams engage in ongoing long- and short-term goal-setting and continuous improvement cycles to advance toward the district’s mission and/or vision.
	2. District and school leaders conduct formal and informal school and classroom visits to measure progress toward previously established implementation benchmarks.
	3. As needed, the district and its schools adjust resource allocations and/or programs to maintain or accelerate progress toward implementation benchmarks.
	4. District and school leaders regularly share progress toward identified goals with staff, students, families, and the school committee.

District Culture**:** The district establishes and maintains a culture in which all leaders contribute to mutual accountability and strong working relationships, enabling them to make challenging decisions to advance student opportunities and outcomes. This culture prioritizes the inclusion of stakeholders in decision-making and invests in strategies that promote governance stability, which are particularly crucial during leadership changes.

1. **Mutual Accountability:** Together, the school committee, superintendent, and district-level administrators set a tone for the district in which stakeholders (including students, families, district leaders, school leaders, union leaders, teachers, and other school staff) collaborate, make decisions, and exercise agency in advancing opportunities and outcomes for all students.
2. **Working Relationships:** Elected officials, district leaders, and school leaders have clearly defined roles and maintain strong working relationships, which they leverage to advance the district’s mission and/or vision, strategic objectives, and improvement plans.
	1. The school committee and superintendent work closely to model the district’s mission and/or vision, set the tone for culture in buildings and classrooms, and advance policies, procedures, and practices focused on student opportunities and outcomes.
	2. The district actively builds trust and brings leaders together around the district’s vision and strategic objectives.
	3. The school committee and superintendent maintain working relationships with its collective bargaining units, as well as its non-collectively bargained employees, to facilitate effective working conditions and support a culture of mutual respect.
	4. The district and municipality maintain a clear division of responsibilities and work together to support student opportunities and outcomes.
3. **Leadership Stability:** The district develops systems that recruit and retain diverse leaders to promote stability and sustain district initiatives in the event of leadership turnover.
4. **Stakeholder Engagement:** The district partners with all key stakeholders and intentionally reaches out to underserved communities and groups to seek their involvement in district decision-making.
	1. The district has clear systems in place for collecting and analyzing feedback from key stakeholders to inform decision-making. These stakeholders include, at a minimum: students, families, the school committee, district administrators, school leaders, teachers, community groups, and union leaders.
	2. The district regularly assesses the participation of the historically underserved groups and families it serves, and actively recruits them for participation in district governance by removing common barriers to participation.

# Curriculum and Instruction

Curricular materials and classroom instruction are central to student learning, opportunities, and outcomes. A shared instructional vision, anchored in culturally and linguistically sustaining practices, guides all curricular and instructional decisions toward equitable outcomes for all students. The district pairs high expectations with individualized supports so that every student can engage in [deeper learning](https://www.doe.mass.edu/deeperlearning/) and develop the knowledge and skills that will prepare them to succeed in college and/or the workplace.

Instructional Leadership**:** The district supports teaching and learning by developing structures and setting expectations for instructional leadership.

1. **Instructional Vision:** The district has a clear instructional vision that centers the needs and experiences of all students, particularly students from historically underserved groups and communities.
	1. The instructional vision is aligned with the district’s improvement plan and strategic priorities and is anchored in culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.
	2. The instructional vision is shared and collaboratively developed among all stakeholders.
2. **Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement:** The district has systems in place to implement, monitor, and continuously improve upon the instructional vision and related initiatives.
	1. The district has formal guidance and systems in place to empower an instructional leadership team (ILT) or its equivalent at the district level and at each school.
	2. The ILT includes representation from diverse stakeholders including special educators, English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, general educators across all grade levels, and administrators.
	3. The district sets expectations for the ILT’s authority and scope of work, including an annual action plan with goals, actions, benchmarks, and progress monitoring mechanisms.

Curriculum and Instructional Materials**:** The district selects and invests in high-quality, evidence-based curricular materials so that students can interact with grade-level curricula that can be appropriately scaffolded to meet the needs of all learners.

1. **Curricular Review and Selection:** The district has a comprehensive and equity-driven process in place for regularly reviewing and selecting curricular materials that align with its instructional vision. This process aligns with the [IMplement MA Process](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/impd/implement-ma.html).
	1. The district includes all relevant stakeholders in curriculum review and selection processes.
	2. The district uses resources, such as [CURATE](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/curate/), [EdReports](https://www.edreports.org/), [NGSS Design Badge](https://www.nextgenscience.org/resources/ngss-design-badge), and [WIDA Prime](https://www.widaprime.org/) to evaluate the quality of curricula in its review process.
	3. The district has clear protocols in place for piloting new curricula and gathering feedback from students and educators.
2. **High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM):** The district implements high-quality curriculum and instructional materials that align with the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html) and [WIDA 2020 standards](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/WIDA-ELD-Standards-Framework-2020.pdf), for all content areas and grade levels.
	1. The district implements curriculum and instructional materials that include all components of HQIM and have been studied and shown to be effective.
	2. In subjects where HQIM options are limited or unavailable, the district implements a robust process that results in high-quality, standards-aligned, district-developed curricula.
	3. The district selects and implements instructional materials that are reflective of the cultural diversity of the district.
	4. The district selects and implements instructional materials that include developmentally and academically appropriate activities and learning tools.
	5. The district selects and implements instructional materials that are vertically and horizontally aligned across all tiers of instruction.
	6. The district develops and disseminates clear implementation guidance and resources to support teachers in adapting as necessary to plan evidence-based, inclusive, and culturally sustaining instruction, including identifying opportunities to create meaningful, relevant connections rooted in the local context.
	7. The district provides professional learning to support educators in implementing HQIM alongside individualized supports for all students (see [Human Resources and Professional Development](#_Human_Resources_and)).

Equitable Practices and Access**:** The district maintains a culture of high expectations by pairing students with individualized supports, examining equity in their instruction and programming, and offering a variety of academic courses and extracurricular opportunities.

1. **Academic Interventions:** The district applies academic interventions as part of an adaptable Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that targets students’ specific needs, challenges all learners, and supports all students in accessing the general curriculum (see [Student Support](#_Student_Support)).
	1. The district uses disaggregated, student-centered data from a variety of assessment sources to select academic intervention materials that align with the common curriculum.
	2. The district leverages student support teams to match students to Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions based on a regular review of student data.
	3. The district allocates sufficient staff and time to implement and adapt Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to meet students’ needs.
	4. The district supports schools in developing schedules that provide teachers with sufficient time to support students who benefit from Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.
	5. The district implements robust progress monitoring procedures that support access to and movement throughout the three tiers of instruction.
	6. The district intentionally engages families and students in decision-making and the delivery of tiered supports.
2. **Support for Historically Underserved Students:** The district provides historically underserved students, particularly those who are marginalized based on race, ethnicity, disability status, and linguistic background, with the individualized supports and services they need to access the curriculum, recognizes and builds upon students’ existing strengths, and uses data to monitor outcomes and adjust where needed.
	1. The district provides multilingual learners and students with disabilities with access to the services that they need in the least restrictive setting, as required by law.
		1. The district provides appropriate services for multilingual learners and students with disabilities through Tier 1 instruction.
		2. The district actively monitors the quality of instructional materials and content delivered as part of specially designed instruction and ESL instruction and implements curricula, programs, and research-based instructional approaches.
		3. The district continuously evaluates the effectiveness of its ESL and special education programs so that ELs have access to ESL services, and all multilingual learners and students with disabilities have equitable access to grade-level curriculum and opportunities to develop and practice discipline-specific language and skills.
	2. The district uses data to continuously monitor the experiences and outcomes of all students, particularly historically underserved students.
	3. The district uses disaggregated data and student feedback to adjust coursework offerings, enrichment opportunities, and school-level systems to meet the needs of its student population and disrupt patterns of present and historical inequities.
3. **Equitable Access to Coursework:** The district provides all students with equitable access to a range of rigorous coursework in all grades, including content areas not subject to statewide testing, advanced courses, electives, and career and technical education courses.
	1. The district offers an array of elective courses and/or extracurricular activities that enrich students’ educational experiences and are equally accessible to and inclusive of all students.
	2. The district uses disaggregated data to monitor the extent to which course enrollment is reflective of the school or district’s student demographics and takes action to address and redress disproportionalities in cases where historically underserved student groups are underrepresented in specialized, elective, and/or advanced courses.
	3. The district offers multilingual learners and students with disabilities pathways to access rigorous coursework taught by educators who possess the required license or endorsement.
	4. The district provides coursework that challenges all students, including advanced learners, to grow and develop their knowledge and skills.

Effective Instruction and Curricular Implementation**:** The district supports schools in creating safe and supportive learning environments, culturally and linguistically sustaining grade-level instruction, and opportunities to engage deeply with academic content.

1. **Learning Culture:** The district develops safe and supportive learning environments in which all students can engage in academic content.
	1. The district supports educators in implementing culturally and linguistically sustaining practices that promote a sense of belonging for all students including those who have been historically underserved.
	2. The district creates a culture in which teacher and student interactions reinforce inclusivity and respect for differences related to background, identity, language, ideas, and perspectives.
	3. The district emphasizes academic discourse and works with school leaders to develop environments in which students can exercise agency over their learning.
2. **District Systems for Curricular Implementation:** The district sets expectations for and supports educators in implementing lessons that reflect grade-level content standards and WIDA English Language Development standards.
	1. The district requires that teachers identify both content and language objectives for all lessons.
	2. The district upholds an expectation that teachers identify strategies for providing supports that enable all students to engage in grade-level content, including students with disabilities and multilingual learners.
3. **Classroom Instruction:** The district works with school and instructional leaders to support teachers in implementing evidence-based and culturally and linguistically sustaining instructional practices.
	1. The district expects that students do the majority of the thinking during each lesson, including critical thinking about the connections between academic content and real-world contexts.
	2. The district expects that lessons include opportunities for students to engage in targeted language development, as aligned to grade appropriate WIDA standards, and in high-quality student-to-student academic discourse (in pairs, small groups, and/or whole class).
	3. The district expects educators to design individualized scaffolds and supports and provide targeted and constructive feedback that clarifies misconceptions and deepens the quality of student work and thinking.
	4. The district expects that lessons include content and activities in which students feel that their identities, experiences, and interests, home languages, and cultures are valued and that academic content connects to their lives outside of school.

# Assessment

Through the establishment of strategic data and assessment systems, the district supports a robust, data-centered culture. The district collects an array of data and uses it to inform decisions at the classroom, school, and district levels. By analyzing assessment results and other data, educators develop an understanding of the whole student, can examine trends across student groups, and can adjust their instruction accordingly. The data and assessment systems, therefore, undergird the district’s efforts to advance equitable student experiences and outcomes.

Data Collection**:** The district maintains data collection systems that are consistent across schools, intentional in the information they collect, and provide educators with multiple data points to provide a comprehensive picture of each student.

1. **Multiple Data Sources:** The district gathers multiple types of academic and non-academic data about each student to inform a comprehensive understanding of each student’s achievement and improvement and the opportunity barriers they may face.
2. **Assessment Strategy:** The district strategically selects and implements assessments that provide the necessary data to inform instruction and programming while not overburdening administrators, teachers, and students.
	1. The district provides all students with multiple formal and informal opportunities to display their knowledge and skills.
	2. The district implements assessments that are aligned to the strategies and content taught in classes, so all students can demonstrate their learning.
	3. The district develops and publicly disseminates an assessment plan or calendar that describes the type and frequency of assessments and balances the need to maximize instructional time with the need for multiple data points.
3. **Assessing for Equity:** The district positions assessment as a critical piece of a larger commitment to equity and is responsive to feedback around its assessment strategy.
	1. The district systematically reviews its assessment tools for bias to promote equitable access and opportunity for all students.
	2. The district provides the necessary resources and accommodations for all students to access formal and informal assessments.

Data Use and Culture**:** The district maintains a robust data culture by disseminating a clear vision for data collection and use, building data literacy amongst staff, creating structures for assessment implementation and data review, and connecting student results to concrete instructional changes and available interventions.

1. **Data Vision:** District, school, and classroom-level leaders have a shared understanding of how data collection and use are connected to the district’s broader instructional vision and strategic priorities.
2. **Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement:** The district collects, analyzes, and triangulates multiple data points, including particularly disaggregated student group data, to inform district planning, decision-making, policies, and practices.
3. **Data Literacy and Access:** The district provides educators with access to relevant data and the resources necessary to understand and analyze it.
	1. The district has common definitions for each type of assessment administered and connects those definitions to the intended use of each data type.
	2. The district implements systems that provide educators with access to relevant student-level data presented in ways that are understandable and actionable.
	3. The district provides educators with the appropriate professional development, planning and collaboration time, and resources to merge multiple student data points into a comprehensive picture of each student (See [Human Resources and Professional Development](#_Human_Resources_and_1)).
4. **Data Review and Implementation:** The district sets expectations around reviewing student data and facilitates regular cycles of data review and adjustments to instruction.
	1. The district works with school-level administrators to identify sufficient time for teachers to review and reflect on student data.
	2. The district supports teachers and instructional leaders in connecting findings to concrete changes in instructional practice.
	3. The district uses data to evaluate each student’s academic, social emotional, and behavioral needs and determine the supports and interventions that will help them access Tier 1 instruction.
	4. The district establishes clear expectations and procedures for monitoring students’ progress and adjusting interventions based on each student’s needs.
	5. The district sets expectations around, and models, the regular disaggregation of student data to identify trends and support students from historically underserved communities.

Sharing Data**:** The district shares assessment results and other data with students and their families in ways that are clear, timely, and easily utilized.

1. **Communication with Students:** The district communicates expectations for engaging all students in goal setting and data reviews in ways that are developmentally appropriate and promote student agency.
2. **Communication with Families:** The district regularly communicates evidence of student, school, and district performance (see [Student Support](#_Student_Support)).
	1. The district sets clear expectations around the minimum frequency in which schools and educators communicate with families about student performance.
	2. The district equips teachers to participate in timely and effective two-way communication with families about their students’ progress toward meeting grade-level standards and, at the secondary level, whether they are on track to being college- and career-ready.
	3. The district provides educators with the information and resources necessary to support families as they work with their students to meet their academic, behavioral, and social-emotional goals.
3. **Grading:** The district implements a transparent and accessible grading system that is calibrated across schools and communicates students’ progress and performance.
	1. The district has a system that allows students and families to regularly monitor grades on assignments, assessment results, and overall course grades.
	2. The district sets expectations around when and how schools and teachers communicate with families if a student is failing in a course or content area.
	3. The district has formal processes in place for teachers to calibrate the grading or scoring of student work to ensure that expectations around student work are consistent and equitable within and across courses, grade-levels, and schools.
4. **Data Privacy:** The district safeguards all students’ confidential data.
	1. The district complies with, and has policies that align with, student data privacy [laws and regulations](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/).
	2. The district has a process by which digital platforms and applications that collect, store, and share student data are reviewed and monitored to ensure ongoing compliance with student data privacy laws and regulations.
	3. The district offers professional learning for staff around student data privacy laws, policies, and best practices for safeguarding student information.

# Human Resources and Professional Development

The district has established systems, policies, and practices that allow administrators to effectively recruit, hire, onboard, and support a highly effective, diverse, and culturally responsive workforce. The district develops effective systems and structures that provide all educators with ongoing access to high-quality professional learning and actionable feedback, and establishes a culture that fosters collaboration, retention, recognition, and advancement.

Human Resources Infrastructure, Policies, and Practices**:** The district has the proper infrastructure in its central office to process all human resources functions and uphold its policies and procedures.

1. **Infrastructure and Human Resources Capacity:** The district has the necessary staff, along with efficient systems, to maintain employee records, control positions, post vacancies, and track employee time and attendance.
	1. The human resources office has the appropriate staff in place to maintain daily operations, annual planning, and data use and dissemination.
	2. The district tracks and maintains personnel records in a secure electronic system.
	3. The district provides staff with access to necessary employment information (e.g., paystubs, benefits, W2, other employee records).
	4. The district has an established system for tracking and controlling positions, such that district and school administrators can view staff lists by department or subject area.
	5. The district has a user-friendly system for posting vacancies and for candidates to easily apply for jobs in the district.
	6. The district has clear timekeeping expectations and implements efficient systems for timesheets and reporting absences.
2. **Policies and Procedures:** The district has clear human resources policies and procedures in place that are accessible, set expectations, and provide sufficient support for district staff.
	1. The district maintains an easily accessible website or platform that shares all relevant human resources policies, procedures, expectations, and resources.
	2. The district verifies that educators possess the appropriate credentials from DESE and other professional organizations and are supported in fulfilling requirements to advance their licensure status if needed.
	3. The district responds professionally and promptly to inquiries about salary, benefits, leave, and related topics.
	4. The district has a formal process in place to resolve staff conflicts and grievances.
	5. The district has [procedures](https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=15) in place to address staff misconduct, and when appropriate, facilitates staff dismissal and [reports misconduct to the relevant authorities](https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/advisory/2020-0914reporting-misconduct.html).
	6. The district uses staffing data to continuously improve and inform human resources policies, procedures, and practices.
		1. Alongside staffing data, the district systematically reviews staff hiring policies and processes to ensure they are non-discriminatory, inclusive, and focused on meeting the needs of all learners.
		2. The district disseminates relevant staffing data to school leaders to support their planning and decision-making.

Staffing**:** The district implements effective practices to hire and sustain a healthy and productive workforce.

1. **Recruitment, Hiring, and Onboarding:** The district has policies and processes in place to recruit, hire, and onboard new staff in support of a diverse and culturally responsive workforce, and in accordance with DESE’s [hiring guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/talent-guide/hiring.html).
	1. Recruitment
		1. The district develops and implements a comprehensive recruitment plan that draws on existing community resources and outside organizations to establish educator pipelines.
		2. The district develops and implements plans to recruit and hire educators from historically underrepresented groups and communities, and those whose lived experiences align with its students’ experiences.
		3. The district monitors and continuously improves its recruitment and diversification efforts and adjusts its strategies as needed.
	2. Hiring
		1. The district has an established process for requesting and posting positions in alignment with the position control system and submitting employees for hire.
		2. For all candidates, the district conducts careful hiring practices by reviewing employment history, conducting the required criminal background checks, and reviewing licensure history through the Educator Licensure and Renewal (ELAR) portal.
		3. The district provides training and support to hiring leads so that hiring processes are comprehensive, efficient, and grounded in equitable practices.
		4. The district prioritizes hiring staff whose experiences and qualifications match students’ needs, and who have a mindset that all students can achieve at high levels.
		5. The district clearly defines district- and school-level administrator hiring responsibilities.
		6. The district implements its hiring practices in all schools and regularly reviews its processes for continuous improvement.
	3. Onboarding
		1. The district has a clear, efficient, and effective system for onboarding new staff which includes providing new staff with an orientation and the information and resources they need to get started in their role.
		2. The district connects new hires to induction and mentoring supports as required (see [New Educator Supports](#Three)).
2. **Educator Assignment:** To the extent possible, the district equitably distributes licensed, effective educators across its schools.
	1. The district uses data to regularly assess staffing needs across the district.
	2. The district assigns licensed, experienced, and effective educators to its high needs students.
3. **Educator Evaluation:** The district implements a strategic, transparent system for evaluation that includes all required components of the [Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/default.html) and promotes educators’ continuous improvement in support of the district’s vision and priorities.
	1. The district’s evaluation system reflects a culture of high expectations for all educators.
	2. The district completes all educator evaluations pursuant to appropriate timelines and collective bargaining agreements.
	3. The district provides training and support in effective, equitable evaluation practices, including supporting educators and evaluators to develop a common understanding of the evaluation system and rubrics.
	4. The district incorporates multiple sources of evidence, including observation data, artifacts, measures of student learning, and, as appropriate, staff or student feedback when evaluating educators.
	5. The district uses data and feedback to regularly assess the implementation of the evaluation system and makes changes as necessary to mitigate bias and advance equity.
4. **Recognition and Advancement:** The district administers formal systems for staff recognition, provides resources to support professional learning outside the district, and develops pathways for highly effective staff to advance in their careers.
	1. The district recognizes staff who demonstrate excellence and works with school-level leaders to coordinate school and district recognition systems that highlight strong educators and other school staff in meaningful ways.
	2. The district offers distributive leadership opportunities that allow teachers to remain in the classroom while attaining leadership roles.
5. **Retention:** The district implements effective retention strategies and creates the conditions to retain highly effective, diverse, and culturally responsive educators.
6. **Working Environment:** The district fosters a positive, productive, and inclusive work environment for all staff, particularly those from historically underserved groups and communities, in which all educators developa sense of belonging.
	1. The district fosters a culture of collaboration and regular feedback in which educators learn from each other, share ideas, and work together around the shared goal of advancing student success.
	2. District and school leaders cultivate a climate in which staff feel trusted, respected, and heard by regularly responding to staff feedback and requests for support.
	3. The district invests in mental health and wellness supports for staff, where feasible.

Professional Learning**:** The district offers comprehensive professional learning opportunities for staff. Through observation and feedback, professional development, collaboration structures, and targeted supports, the district provides educators with the resources and guidance they need to support all students.

1. **Observation and Feedback:** The district supports school leaders in implementing job-embedded coaching and cycles of observation and feedback for all educators, within and beyond the educator evaluation system.
	1. The district develops guidance for observation and feedback to support administrators and coaches in providing support to educators that promotes effective instruction and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.
	2. The district, in partnership with its school leaders, provides teachers with regular, high quality, differentiated instructional coaching and feedback that is explicitly connected to the professional development provided.
	3. The district assigns staff who have expertise in evidence-based practices, including culturally and linguistically sustaining practices, to serve as coaches or mentors.
2. **Professional Development Opportunities:** Based on classroom observations and educator evaluations, the district provides ongoing evidence-based, data-informed, and relevant professional development opportunities that are aligned with the [Massachusetts Professional Development Standards](https://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.html).
	1. The district develops a sustainable professional development plan that offers coherent, high-quality, and universally designed adult learning aligned to the district’s instructional vision.
	2. The district offers professional development opportunities that build educators’ skills in accordance with the [Standards of Effective Practice](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/PartIII_AppxC.pdf).
	3. The district offers differentiated and specialized professional development opportunities and gives teachers and administrators agency in selecting the appropriate offerings for each educator.
	4. The district uses multiple data sources to select, develop, and monitor the effectiveness of its professional development offerings to generate evidence that the opportunities result in the use of improved instructional practices and student outcomes.
3. **Collaboration Time:** The district works with school leaders to develop schedules that allow for regular professional learning and collaborative planning time within and across subject areas and grade levels.
	1. The district issues guidance around groupings for collaborative planning (e.g., interventionists, English learner educators, special educators, and paraeducators).
	2. The district provides protocols for collaborative planning, professional learning communities (PLCs), and data team meetings to optimize limited time by engaging in evidence-based activities including examining student work and lesson internalization.
4. **New Educator Supports:** The district concentrates resources so that novice teachers, school leaders, and staff who are new to the district receive supports that align with regulatory and licensure requirements, state guidelines, as well as the district’s improvement plan and instructional vision.
	1. As part of its [induction and mentoring program](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/default.html), the district includes an orientation, a support team, and an intentionally matched, trained mentor.
	2. The district selects mentors who are well-qualified, extensively trained, and have demonstrated effectiveness with students and colleagues.
	3. The district provides sufficient time for new educators to engage in regular classroom observations and other mentoring activities.
	4. The district continually evaluates and refines its induction and mentoring program through systematic data collection on program design, implementation, and outcomes, including student learning outcomes and educator retention rates.
5. **Supports for Non-Instructional Staff:** The district onboards, trains, coaches, and provides professional development opportunities for its non-instructional staff (such as administrative support staff, food service employees, custodians, technology staff, etc.), so that employees can hone their skills and enable educators to achieve success with their students.

# Student Support

The district supports the whole student by creating safe and supportive environments, meeting students’ health and wellbeing needs, and engaging all families. These supports are built on a robust Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that flexibly assesses and addresses each student’s academic, social emotional, and behavioral strengths and needs.

Safe and Supportive School Climate and Culture**:** The district builds a supportive environment for all learners in which students are physically, emotionally, and mentally safe, as well as motivated to attend school and participate in leadership opportunities.

1. **Safe and Supportive Learning Environments:** The district uses evidence-based, culturally and linguistically sustaining practices to create safe and supportive learning environments in which all students, staff, and families develop a sense of safety, connection, and belonging to the school and district community.
	1. The district maintains safe and secure facilities that are conducive to healthy development.
		1. The district works with local fire and police to develop, implement, and annually update multi-hazard evacuation plans for each school in accordance with [emergency management planning](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/emergencyplan/) requirements.
		2. The district works with school nurses and local emergency medical services agencies to develop and implement a [medical and behavioral health emergency response plan](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter69/Section8A) that is updated every three years.
		3. The district provides faculty, staff, students and their families with information and training on procedures for preventing, mitigating, responding to, and recovering from school related incidents.
	2. The district, in partnership with school ILTs or other support teams, creates affirming and developmentally appropriate environments that integrate students’ racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and gender identities and sexual orientations into the school environment.
	3. The district regularly evaluates students’ social and emotional strengths and needs and supports educators in building school cultures that foster social and emotional development.
	4. The district implements clear schoolwide behavioral support systems, expectations, and interventions in which specific rules, behaviors, and expectations are taught, modeled, and reinforced with a culturally responsive lens, and that emphasize alternatives to exclusionary practice.
		1. The district uses data to regularly examine bias and equity in its behavioral support systems and takes action to eliminate, mitigate, and replace inequitable practices and experiences.
		2. The district actively builds adult capacity to implement consistent expectations, procedures, and behavioral support strategies.
		3. The district enables school leaders to adapt behavioral support systems to best meet the needs of their students.
		4. The district builds educators’ capacity to identify, understand, and respond to the underlying causes of student behavior.
		5. The district provides resources to address intensive behavioral support needs.
		6. The district engages students and families in developing, implementing, and continuously improving behavioral support systems.
	5. The district develops and implements an effective bullying prevention and intervention plan that includes [all elements required by state statute](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section37O).
	6. The district systematically collects and analyzes data around school and district culture and uses it to build upon strengths and inform adjustments to practice and policy.
2. **Student Attendance:** The district implements effective strategies to increase attendance and engagement to prevent and mitigate the effects of chronic absenteeism.
	1. The district works closely with students and their families to devise supportive and non-punitive engagement and attendance strategies that address the underlying causes of students’ absences.
	2. The district disseminates multilingual, culturally- and family-friendly information about the importance of attendance and the effects of missed school time.
	3. The district regularly analyzes and disaggregates student attendance data to analyze trends and identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism.
3. **Student Voice and Leadership:** The district creates opportunities for all students to exercise voice and leadership at the classroom, school, district, community, and state levels.
	1. The district supports school leaders and teachers in developing developmentally appropriate systems through which students in all grade levels regularly exercise voice, choice, and agency over their learning and the learning environment.
	2. The district has formal systems in place to collect and act upon student feedback at the classroom, school, and district levels.

Health and Wellbeing**:** The district provides services and instruction around health and wellbeing to support students in accessing appropriate care and developing the knowledge and skills needed to lead healthy lives.

1. **Comprehensive Health and Physical Education:** The district offers health and physical education, aligned with the [Massachusetts Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Frameworks](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.doe.mass.edu%2Fframeworks%2Fhealth%2F2023-09.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK), to all students.
2. **Physical Activity, Sports, and Recess:** The district provides students with multiple opportunities to engage in physical activity and strengthen their bodies while attending school.
3. **Nursing and Health:** The district provides school nurses at each school site who provide access to health services.
	1. The district monitors the physical health needs of all students via routine health screenings pursuant to state statute.
	2. The district has a clear allergy collection and verification protocol in place, in alignment with [USDA guidelines](https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-school-meal-programs).
	3. The district supports students and their families and caregivers by providing information on and referrals to health providers when requested or needed.
4. **Mental and Behavioral Health:** The district implements tiered mental and behavioral health services that support all students’ mental and emotional wellness.
	1. The district evaluates the mental and behavioral health needs of all students and connects them to appropriate mental health services.
	2. The district leverages community partnerships to connect students to the specialized care they need.
	3. The district implements Tier 1 social and emotional supports for all students to promote mental and behavioral health.
5. **Wellness Policy:** The district maintains a local wellness policy, as required by law, that helps the district establish an environment that prioritizes student health, well-being, and the ability to learn.

Family and Community Partnerships**:** The district partners with families and community organizations to support all students. Through genuine outreach and employing strategies, the district builds positive and authentic relationships in which all stakeholders support student experiences.

1. **Family Partnerships and Communication:** The district and its schools build culturally responsive, authentic, and trusting relationships with all families that position them as equal partners in their students’ education.
	1. The district has clear and consistent multilingual communication systems in place.
		1. The district establishes and communicates expectations for how school and district staff will maintain reciprocal two-way communication with all families.
		2. The district’s communication systems promote continuity as students move through grade levels or between district schools.
	2. The district works with school leaders to create learning environments in which all families, particularly those from historically underserved backgrounds, develop a sense of belonging.
	3. The district creates inclusive opportunities for all families to participate in school- and district-level decision-making.
	4. The district provides interpretation and translation services so that all families can communicate and participate in district and school meetings.
2. **Community Partnerships:** The district works with organizations in its community to provide services and enriching experiences to students and families during and outside of the school day.
	1. The district has processes to identify, establish, and manage partnerships and other community resources to engage during in-school and out-of-school time.
	2. The district defines roles and responsibilities for schools and ILTs or other support teams when collaborating with outside partners.
	3. The district uses disaggregated data to evaluate the extent to which partnerships are meeting students’ needs.
3. **Wraparound Supports:** The district connects all students, particularly its most vulnerable students and families with wraparound supports.
	1. The district proactively identifies needs in its community through outreach and interview methods.
	2. The district aligns the support it provides to the needs of students, families, and the community.
	3. The district has systems to track referrals and service delivery so that services are delivered consistently.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**:** The district meets the academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs of all students through a robust and fluid MTSS system. The MTSS system is well-defined and is supported by policies and practices at the district and school levels (see [Curriculum and Instruction](#_Curriculum_and_Instruction)).

1. **MTSS System:** The district implements an MTSS system aligned to the MTSS Blueprint that proactively identifies and meets students’ academic, behavioral, and social emotional strengths and needs.
	1. The district sets clear guidance for school leaders around how to implement each component of the MTSS system.
	2. The district works with school leaders to select the evidence-based interventions and supports that can be implemented across each of the three tiers of support.
2. **MTSS Structure:** The district clearly defines the systems’ three tiers of support.
	1. The district implements Tier 1 academic, social emotional, and behavioral supports for all students. This includes the general classroom curriculum, school-wide behavior support systems, and classroom or school practices that promote social-emotional development.
	2. The district provides Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions for students who need additional support to access the common curriculum.
	3. The district provides tiered supports to all students, including students with disabilities and ELs, and does not replace or delay the implementation of special education or ESL services.

# Financial and Asset Management

Through its policies, systems, and procedures, the district strategically allocates and utilizes funding and other resources in alignment with applicable laws to improve all students’ performance, opportunities, and outcomes. The district collaborates with its partners to run daily operations, manage its assets, and develop long-term plans for sustainability.

Business Office Staffing and Infrastructure**:** The district, in cooperation with its municipal partners, where applicable, effectively runs daily business operations and maintains financial records in alignment with applicable law.

1. **Business Office Staffing:** The business office has a sufficient level of qualified and appropriately licensed or credentialed staff to support daily operations and annual planning.
2. **Written Policies and Procedures:** The business office has comprehensive written policies and procedures that outline ongoing work, ensure compliance with state and federal requirements, establish an internal system of checks and balances, and provide continuity to operations when staffing disruptions arise.
3. **Financial Management System:** The district utilizes an efficient, comprehensive, and secure financial management system for monitoring and controlling resources and follows the [Uniform Massachusetts Accounting System (UMAS)](https://www.mass.gov/doc/umaspdf/download).
4. **Records Management:** In alignment with the [Massachusetts Statewide Records Retention Schedule](https://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcpdf/MA_Statewide_Records_Schedule.pdf), the district has an efficient system for preserving, categorizing, and, when permissible, destroying financial documents, including (but not limited to) procurement records, invoices, purchase orders, and receipts.
5. **Municipal Relations:** The district and municipality have a strong working relationship in which roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
	1. In non-regional districts, the district and municipality have a formal, written agreement that describes the process and timeline for incorporating the school committee’s budgeting process into the municipality’s budgeting process, as well as the roles, responsibilities, and costs assumed by each party.
	2. In regional school districts, the district and member municipalities have a regional agreement which, along with any amendment to the agreement, is approved by the member municipalities and the Commissioner, consistent with law and regulation.

Budgeting and Budget Process**:** The district equitably distributes its resources through a strategic budgeting process and develops multi-year projections to anticipate future staffing and student needs.

1. **Equitable Distribution of Funds:** The district’s budget equitably funds schools and departments by providing adequate resources, based on regularly conducted needs assessments, to meet the needs of all students with particular attention to historically underserved populations.
	1. The district’s budget meets or exceeds net school spending requirements.
	2. The district’s budget clearly identifies funds associated with grants, student activities and organizations, fees, and revolving funds.
	3. The district’s budget provides appropriate levels of funding for high-quality instructional and intervention materials and assessments, key positions, and professional development.
	4. The district budgets for anticipated out-of-district special education placements and related transportation costs and has a sustainable funding source to cover unexpected increases.
2. **Budget Development and Approval:** The district regularly engages in a transparent budgeting process that is aligned with the district strategic plan and incorporates input from district administrators, school leaders, school councils, teachers, policymakers, and the community.
	1. The district publishes an annual budget calendar that lays out critical meeting dates and milestones for the budget.
	2. As part of the budgeting process, the district reviews student performance data, enrollment projections, staffing levels, and schedules to create the basis for budget requests.
	3. The budgeting process includes an evaluation of the efficacy of previous investments and uses that information to strategically reallocate existing resources.
	4. The budgeting process includes opportunities for school leaders and budget managers to request positions and supplies, and generally solicit budgetary adjustments.
	5. The school committee reviews and approves, and the municipality adopts, an adequate budget in a timely manner.
	6. The budget process culminates in an easily accessible, publicly available budget book.
3. **Grants Management and Strategy:** The district responsibly manages and strategically applies for state and federal grants that are aligned with the district’s strategic plan.
	1. The district has systems in place to ensure that grant terms and requirements are followed in a timely manner.
	2. The district strategically uses its restricted funds (e.g., circuit breaker, specific state grants), blended where appropriate with its unrestricted funds (e.g., local funds, Chapter 70), to maximize benefits to students.
	3. The district develops sustainability plans to continue grant-funded programming upon the culmination of the grant, where feasible.
4. **Financial Planning:** The district has a current multi-year financial plan that incorporates projected enrollment and required staffing, cost-of-living adjustments set in its collective bargaining agreements, and anticipated increases in its service contracts.
5. **Spending and Controls:** The district has policies and procedures in place so that funds are regularly monitored and spent in accordance with requirements.
	1. The district works with budget managers to track, and as needed, adjust current year spending.
	2. The district provides budget updates to the School Committee on a regular basis.
	3. The district or municipality hires independent financial auditing services every year, implements audit recommendations in a timely fashion, and complies with other regulations as applicable.

Operations**:** The district maintains regular operations for its schools, including enrollment and assignment, building and grounds, transportation, nutrition, and technology.

1. **Enrollment and Assignment:** The district leverages its enrollment and assignment policies to provide all students with equitable access to high-quality learning environments and opportunities.
	1. The districtprovides families with clear, accessible information about their options for school assignment and makes it easy for families to register for school.
	2. The district regularly assesses and adjusts its student assignment system and feeder patterns, particularly the location of specialized services.
2. **Buildings and Grounds:** The district (in partnership with the municipality, where applicable) maintains its buildings and grounds and provides for accessible, clean, safe, secure, well‐lit, and well‐maintained facilities that are conducive to student learning.
	1. The district has a formal process in place for requesting and responding to maintenance services and other assistance.
	2. The district has, and regularly reviews, its preventative maintenance plan.
3. **Transportation:** As required by law, the district provides reliable transportation services, either on its own or through a vendor, so that students can safely get to and from school on time.
4. **Nutrition:** The district offers its students nutritious, healthy breakfasts and lunches at no charge to families.
	1. The district-provided meals include a diverse variety of offerings, are culturally relevant, and include locally purchased food to the extent possible.
	2. The district incorporates student feedback in menu development yielding high levels of interest and participation in breakfast and lunch.
5. **Technology:** The district provides its students and staff with the hardware, software, and related licenses and support for everyday learning and daily operations.
6. **Procurement and Contracting:** The district purchases supplies and services in alignment with state laws and effectively manages those contracts with vendors.
	1. The district has an established process for procuring supplies and services in alignment with local, state, and federal laws and guidance.
	2. With its municipal partners, the district executes and manages contracts with its vendors, and has established timelines to proactively track the end of contracts, and provides sufficient time for renewal or re-bidding for core district services (e.g., transportation).

Managing Capital Assets and Capital Planning**:** The district has a system for tracking its assets, maintains and replaces them on a regular cycle, and has a sustainable long-term capital plan given building conditions and shifting enrollment.

1. **Asset Tracking, Maintenance, Replacement, and Disposal:** The district manages and tracks its inventory of capital assets and critical supplies through a catalog or other efficient system.
2. **Capital Planning:** The district has a current long-term capital plan that describes future capital needs, is based upon future enrollment projections and facility assessments, and incorporates input from district and community stakeholders.

# Glossary

The following are selected terms and concepts that are foundational to understanding and implementing the practices outlined throughout the document. Note that this list is *not* exhaustive of all terms in the document.

**Culturally Responsive Learning Environments:** Learning environments in which culture and identity are viewed as assets and valuable resources, including students’ race, ethnicity, or linguistic assets, among other characteristics. These learning environments regularly engage in culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.

**Culturally Sustaining Practices:** Practices that support schools in “sustaining – rather than eradicating – the cultural ways of being of communities of color” through:

* Critical centering on dynamic community languages, valued practices, and knowledges,
* Student and community agency and input,
* Content and instruction that acknowledges the histories of racial, ethnic, and linguistic communities,
* Contending with internalized oppressions, and
* Educators to be able to adapt curriculum to those learning settings.

**Deeper Learning:** Deeper Learning is the ability to understand and address the complex elements of a subject or topic and to draw connections within and across contexts — whether that means the same class, another discipline, students' community, or the broader world. Deeper Learning happens both independently and through collaboration, and it means that students’ understanding of the what, why, and how of their learning is rich and multi-faceted. Deeper Learning is cultivated by engaging students with grade-level work that is relevant, real-world, and interactive and emerges at the intersection of mastery, identity, and creativity as three observed outcomes of learning.

* **Mastery** is evident when all students develop the knowledge and/or skills outlined in the standards and practices, with the ability to transfer that knowledge across situations.
* **Identity** is evident when all students become more invested in the discipline by thinking of and seeing themselves as capable and active agents who do that kind of work. To support a shift in thinking from “I am learning about biology,” to “I am a biologist,” educators affirm students’ complex identities, including cultural and racial heritage, and leverage their funds of knowledge, experiences, and interests.
* **Creativity** is evident when all students shift from receiving knowledge of a discipline to acting or applying their learning to share ideas, solutions, and/or make something within the discipline.

**English Learner (EL):** A student who does not speak English or whose native language is not English, and who is not currently able to perform classroom work in English.

**High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM):** HQIM exhibit a coherent sequence of lessons that target learning of grade-appropriate skills and knowledge through instructional strategies that are well supported by research and other characteristics such as engaging content and inclusive design.

**Historically Underserved Students:** Groups of students who have been systematically marginalized and disadvantaged in the educational system due to factors such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, disability, geographic location, gender identity, sexual orientation, migrant status, and/or religious beliefs. These students often face significant barriers to accessing quality education and resources, resulting in disparities in academic achievement, graduation rates, and overall educational opportunities.

**Induction Program:** A planned program of professional support for new teachers and administrators provided by the school district, including orientation, opportunities for classroom observation and conferencing, and peer group meetings. An induction program should be an integral part of a school district's professional development plan.

**Linguistically Sustaining Practices:** Practices that promote multilingualism as an asset, honor the linguistic resources students bring to the classroom, and rely on a research-based understanding of how students acquire language. Leveraging their understanding of students and the process of language acquisition, educators unpack the language expectations embedded in classroom tasks and design scaffolds and explicit language instruction that provide all students access to rigorous content.

**Multilingual Learner (ML):** A student who encounters and/or interacts in languages in addition to English on a regular basis. MLs include students who are commonly referred to as “English learners” (ELs), former English learners, dual language learners, newcomers, students with limited or interrupted formal schooling (SLIFE), long-term English learners, English learners with disabilities, gifted and talented English learners, heritage language learners, students with English as an additional language, and students who speak varieties of English or indigenous languages.