Targeted District Review Report

Granby Public Schools

Review conducted March 5–7, 2018

Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Executive Summary

Granby is confronted with one of the steepest student enrollment and teacher workforce declines in the Commonwealth.[[1]](#footnote-1) [[2]](#footnote-2) District leaders face what many interviewees referred to a “vicious cycle”: an annual, recurrent pattern of enrollment drops, budget crises, and substantial reductions in staffing, program, and student learning opportunities, followed by further enrollment declines in the next school year. No one interviewed expressed the view that this pattern was sustainable.

In the face of declining enrollment in recent years, the district has made some adjustments in resource allocation. For example, it has merged the combined student bodies and faculties of the district’s two elementary schools and at the time of the onsite review in March 2018 expected to open the new elementary school by the fall 2018. However, the junior senior high school is in poor condition and needs significant work.[[3]](#footnote-3) In 2010, voters defeated a proposed plan for a new junior senior high school. The district has not resubmitted a plan for a new junior senior high school.

The following table shows state data about five-year trends in key parameters of enrollment, staffing, Chapter 70 state aid, and spending for the district and the state.

**Table 1: Granby Public Schools**

**Comparing Five-Year Change for Granby and the State 2013–2017**

| **Parameter** | **Granby** | **State** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Enrollment | -25.1% | 0.1% |
| District and School Leadership FTEs | -15.3% | +3.3% |
| Teacher FTEs | -28.5% | +2.0% |
| Paraprofessional FTEs | -5.1% | +6.8% |
| Expenditures from all funding sources (excluding debt and capital) | -4.9% | +14.0% |
| In-district expenditures per pupil | +21.0% | +14.4% |
| Chapter 70 state aid | +2.4% | +10.9% |
| Chapter 70 state aid per foundation enrollment | +8.1% | +6.4% |
| Required Net School Spending | +2.2% | +8.2% |

Sources: District End-of-Year Reports and Chapter 70 Program information on ESE website.

Between 2013 and 2017, the district saw fewer students, a small decrease in total spending, and a 21 percent increase in in-district expenditures per pupil. Because enrollment is likely to continue to decline, the district will face continued pressure on planning and budgeting.

The review team urges district leaders and town officials to take decisive and collaborative action to prepare projections of enrollment, expenditures, and revenues for the next five years. In addition, town officials and district leaders should assess the long-term impact of declining enrollment on available revenues and other resources and develop plans to meet the challenges of declining enrollment and an inadequate junior senior high school. Without such projections, the district and the town cannot get the return they want from investment choices, chart the future direction of their schools, and ensure that they are effectively supporting district priorities.

**Instruction**

The team observed 33 classes throughout the district: 13 at the high school, 6 at the junior high school, and 14 at the 2 elementary schools. The team observed 9 ELA classes, 11 mathematics classes, and 13 classes in other subject areas. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using ESE’s Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented in Appendix C.

The quality of observed instruction varied across grade and school levels with considerable strength noted in lessons in grades 1–6. Most classes observed at the senior high school were teacher-centered, with an emphasis on lecture and note-taking. However, the review team members did observe several classes at all levels that could serve as exemplars. In observed classes across the district, the quality of instruction varied and students were not consistently challenged to use higher-order thinking skills.

**Strengths**

* District leaders are acting as a team, exercising decisive leadership and developing the leadership skills of other educators, and supporting educators as together they implement the district’s emerging improvement strategies.
* The superintendent, principals, and the director of pupil services, working with a team of stakeholders, have drafted a three-year strategic plan, with goals in the areas of student achievement, school-community collaboration, social-emotional-physical development, and district funding and sustainability.
* In most observed elementary classes, team members noted a high incidence of teachers’ knowledge of subject matter, classroom routines and positive supports in place to ensure that students behave appropriately, appropriate classroom strategies well matched to learning objectives, a classroom climate that is conducive to teaching and learning, and students engaged in learning.

In the face of declining enrollment in recent years, the district has made some significant adjustments in resource allocation.

**Challenges and Areas for Growth**

* District leaders and town officials have not developed a systematic and collaborative approach to address the educational and financial challenges that the district and the town face.
* In observed classrooms, the quality and rigor of instruction varied across the district, and instruction often did not challenge students.
* The district has not achieved consistency in the implementation of its educator evaluation system.
* The district is in the early stages of taking action on the components of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework that require the collection and use of feedback and multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement in the teacher evaluation process.
  + - The district does not have a comprehensive and data driven professional development program that is collaboratively developed, with clear and measurable goals based on district and school priorities.

The junior senior high school is in poor condition and needs significant work.

The district does not have complete, accurate, and transparent budget documents. The district and the town do not have a signed, written agreement on municipal expenditures in support of schools.

**Recommendations**

The school committee, superintendent, and town leaders should work together to forge a new approach to district-town collaboration.

The district should improve instruction by establishing and communicating specific expectations for high-quality instruction.

The district should continue and expand its efforts to fully and effectively implement all components of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework.

* + - The district’s new professional development program should be characterized by a strong and collaborative leadership structure which assumes responsibility for the comprehensive planning and coordination of programs and supports that are aligned with and directly support district priorities, individual school goals, and the needs of educators.

Administrators and school committee members should improve communications with town officials and develop a collaborative working relationship. Administrators should continue to explore options to address declining enrollment and its causes.

* + - District administrators should create and maintain comprehensive and accurate budget documents and share information on district finances and operations with all constituents.

Granby Public Schools Targeted 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. In general, districts performing at the 20th percentile or above receive a targeted review, while lower-performing districts receive a comprehensive review.[[4]](#footnote-4) Reviews consider carefully the effectiveness of systemwide functions, with reference to three district standards used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE). Targeted reviews address one of the following sets of three standards: **Governance and Administrative Systems** (Leadership and Governance, Human Resources and Professional Development, and Financial and Asset Management standards) or **Student-Centered Systems** (Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support standards) —and may include the team’s observations/thoughts about systems and practices in the set of standards not being addressed. All targeted reviews include finding(s) about instruction based on classroom observations. A targeted review identifies systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. The targeted district review is designed to promote district reflection on its own performance and potential next steps. In addition to being a tool that districts can use to inform their own improvement efforts, review reports may be used by ESE to identify technical assistance and other resources to provide to the district. This targeted review by the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring focused on the following standards: Leadership and Governance, Human Resources and Professional Development, and Financial and Asset Management.

Methodology

Reviews collect evidence for each of the three district standards identified as the focus of the targeted review. Team members also observe classroom instructional practice. A district review team consisting of independent consultants with expertise in the district standards reviews documentation, data, and reports for two days before conducting a three-day district visit that includes visits to individual schools. The team conducts interviews and focus group sessions with such stakeholders as school committee members, teachers’ association representatives, administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Subsequent to the onsite review, the team meets for two days to develop findings and recommendations before submitting a draft report to ESE.

Site Visit

The site visit to the Granby Public Schools was conducted from March 5–7, 2018. The site visit included 22 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 30 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students, students’ families, and teachers’ association representatives. The review team conducted two focus groups with six elementary-school teachers and a guidance counselor, and one teacher from the Granby Junior Senior High School.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, attendance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instructional practice in 33 classrooms in 3 schools. The team collected data using ESE’s Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

**District Profile**

Granby has a town manager/selectmen form of government and the chair of the school committee is elected. The five members of the school committee meet twice monthly during the school year.

The current superintendent has been in the position since July 1, 2016. The district leadership team includes the superintendent, the director of pupil services, two principals, and a part-time contract business manager. Central office positions have been mostly stable in number over the two years before the onsite review in March 2018. The district has two principals: one leading the two elementary schools and the other leading the junior senior high school. There is an assistant principal at the junior senior high school. In 2017–2018, there were 57 teachers in the district.

In the 2017–2018 school year, 701 students were enrolled in the district’s 3 schools:

**Table 2: Granby Public Schools,**

**Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment\*, 2017–2018**

| **School** | **School Type** | **Grades Served** | **Enrollment** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| West Street Elementary | ES | Pre-K–3 | 212 |
| East Meadow Elementary | ES | 4–6 | 148 |
| Granby Junior Senior High School | Junior Senior HS | 7–12 | 341 |
| **Totals** | **3 schools** | **Pre-K–12** | **701** |
| \*As of October 1, 2017 | | | |

Between 2013 and 2017 overall student enrollment decreased by 25 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English language learners (ELLs) and former ELLs) as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were substantially lower than the median in-district per pupil expenditures for 16 K–12 districts of similar size (<1,000 students) in fiscal year 2016:  $13,306 as compared with $17,551 (see [District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing and Finance](http://www.mass.gov/edu/government/departments-and-boards/ese/programs/accountability/tools-and-resources/district-analysis-review-and-assistance/dart-for-districts-and-dart-for-schools.html)). Actual net school spending has been above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B3 in Appendix B.

Student Performance

**Note:** The Next-Generation MCAS assessment is administered to grades 3–8 in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics; it was administered for the first time in 2017. (For more information, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/parents/results-faq.html>.) The MCAS assessment is administered to grades 5 and 8 in science and to grade 10 in ELA, math, and science. Data from the two assessments are presented separately because the tests are different and cannot be compared.

**The average scaled score on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment for all students was below the state rate by 2.8 points in ELA and below the state rate by 2.7 points in math.**

| **Table 3: Granby Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA and Math Average Scaled Score (SS) Grades 3–8, 2017** | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **N** | **ELA SS** | **State SS** | **N** | **Math SS** | **State SS** |
| High Needs | 113 | 487.8 | 488.5 | 113 | 486.9 | 488.1 |
| Econ. Dis. | 72 | 490.1 | 489.2 | 72 | 487.5 | 488.1 |
| SWD | 54 | 480.2 | 480.0 | 54 | 479.5 | 479.8 |
| ELLs | 15 | 486.7 | 484.9 | 15 | 489.8 | 486.8 |
| All | 346 | 496.3 | 499.1 | 346 | 496.1 | 498.8 |
| Next Generation MCAS Achievement Levels: 440–470 Not Meeting Expectations; 470–500 Partially Meeting Expectations; 500–530 Meeting Expectations; 530–560 Exceeding Expectations | | | | | | |

**The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment in grades 3–8 was below the state rate by 6 percentage points in ELA (43 percent vs. 49 percent) and below the state rate by 10 percentage points in math (38 percent vs. 48 percent).**

* In ELA, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was above the state rate by 4 percentage points for English language learners, equal to the state rate for students with disabilities, and below the state rate by 1 and 2 percentage points for economically disadvantaged students and high needs students, respectively.
* In math, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was below the state rate by 1 to 5 percentage points for high needs students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities, and above the state rate by 1 percentage point for English language learners.

| **Table 4: Granby Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA and Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding (M/E) Expectations Grades 3–8, 2017** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **N** | **ELA M/E** | **State M/E** | **Above/Below State** | **N** | **Math M/E** | **State M/E** | **Above/Below State** |
| High Needs | 113 | 25% | 27% | -2 | 113 | 22% | 27% | -5 |
| Econ. Dis. | 72 | 28% | 29% | -1 | 72 | 24% | 27% | -3 |
| SWD | 54 | 13% | 13% | 0 | 54 | 13% | 14% | -1 |
| ELLs | 15 | 27% | 23% | 4 | 15 | 27% | 26% | 1 |
| All | 346 | 43% | 49% | -6 | 346 | 38% | 48% | -10 |

**The percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the MCAS assessment in 10th grade was 7 and 2 percentage points above the state rate in ELA and math, respectively.**

* In ELA, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced was above the state rate by 15 and 11 percentage points for high needs students and economically disadvantaged students, respectively.
* In math, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced was above the state rate by 7 and 2 percentage points for high needs students and economically disadvantaged students, respectively.

| **Table 5: Granby Public Schools**  **MCAS ELA and Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2017** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **N** | **ELA** | **State** | **Above/Below State** | **N** | **Math** | **State** | **Above/Below State** |
| High Needs | 18 | 94% | 79% | 15 | 17 | 65% | 58% | 7 |
| Econ. Dis. | 13 | 92% | 81% | 11 | 13 | 62% | 60% | 2 |
| SWD | 9 | -- | 68% | -- | 8 | -- | 42% | -- |
| ELLs | -- | -- | 59% | -- | -- | -- | 39% | -- |
| All | 48 | 98% | 91% | 7 | 47 | 81% | 79% | 2 |

**Between 2014 and 2017, science proficiency for all students declined by 2 percentage points, did not improve for high needs students, improved by 3 percentage points for students with disabilities, and in 2017 was below the state rate for each group.**

| **Table 6: Granby Public Schools**  **MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grades 5, 8, and 10, 2014-2017** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **N (2017)** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr change** | **State (2017)** |
| High Needs | 58 | 29% | 47% | 35% | 29% | 0 | 31% |
| Econ. Dis. | 37 | -- | 57% | 44% | 30% | -- | 32% |
| SWD | 32 | 13% | 29% | 17% | 16% | 3 | 21% |
| ELLs | 9 | 30% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 20% |
| All | 168 | 50% | 66% | 54% | 48% | -2 | 53% |

**In ELA, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment was 6 percentage points below the state rate in grades 3–8 as a whole and 1 to 7 percentage points below the state rate in the 3rd, 5th, and 6th grades, and below the state rate by 29 percentage points in the 8th grade.**

**In math, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment was 10 percentage points below the state rate in grades 3–8 as a whole, 7 and 4 percentage points below the state rate in the 4th and 7th grades, respectively, 13 and 19 percentage points below the state rate in the 3rd and 5th grades, respectively, and 28 percentage points below the state rate in the 8th grade. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-generation MCAS assessment was 9 percentage points above the state rate in the 6th grade.**

| **Table 7: Granby Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA and Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding (M/E) Expectations in Grades 3–8, 2017** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **N** | **ELA M/E** | **State ELA** | **Difference** | **N** | **Math M/E** | **State Math** | **Difference** |
| 3 | 42 | 40% | 47% | -7 | 42 | 36% | 49% | -13 |
| 4 | 50 | 48% | 48% | 0 | 50 | 42% | 49% | -7 |
| 5 | 63 | 44% | 49% | -5 | 63 | 27% | 46% | -19 |
| 6 | 58 | 50% | 51% | -1 | 58 | 59% | 50% | 9 |
| 7 | 74 | 51% | 50% | 1 | 74 | 43% | 47% | -4 |
| 8 | 59 | 20% | 49% | -29 | 59 | 20% | 48% | -28 |
| 3–8 | 346 | 43% | 49% | -6 | 346 | 38% | 48% | -10 |

**Between 2014 and 2017, in science, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the MCAS assessment declined by 2 percentage points in the district as a whole and by 13 and 5 percentage points in the 5th and 8th grades, respectively, and improved by 14 percentage points in the 10th grade.**

| **Table 8: Granby Public Schools**  **MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grades 5, 8, and 10, 2014–2017** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **N (2017)** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr change** | **State** |
| 5 | 63 | 59% | 71% | 63% | 46% | -13 | 46% |
| 8 | 59 | 30% | 41% | 28% | 25% | -5 | 40% |
| 10 | 46 | 64% | 83% | 75% | 78% | 14 | 74% |
| All | 168 | 50% | 66% | 54% | 48% | -2 | 53% |

**Between 2014 and 2017, in ELA, the median student growth percentile (SGP) declined by 18.5 to 30.0 points in the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 8th grades, and improved by 14.5 points in the 10th grade.**

| **Table 9: Granby Public Schools**  **ELA Median Student Growth Percentile, 2014–2017** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **N (2017)** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr change** | **State (2017)** |
| 3 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| 4 | 47 | 56.5 | 58.0 | 50.0 | 38.0 | -18.5 | 50.0 |
| 5 | 62 | 58.0 | 57.0 | 64.0 | 37.5 | -20.5 | 50.0 |
| 6 | 52 | 66.5 | 71.0 | 79.0 | 36.5 | -30.0 | 50.0 |
| 7 | 70 | 36.5 | 19.0 | 16.0 | 29.0 | -7.5 | 50.0 |
| 8 | 57 | 51.0 | 26.5 | 36.0 | 28.0 | -23.0 | 50.0 |
| 10 | 46 | 41.5 | 56.0 | 31.0 | 56.0 | 14.5 | 50.0 |
| Changes in SGP of 10 points or more are considered meaningful. | | | | | | | |

**Between 2014 and 2017, in math, the median SGP declined by 16 and 15 points in the 5th and 8th grades, respectively, and by 26 points in the 4th grade, and improved by 12 and 13.5 points in the 6th and 10th grades, respectively.**

| **Table 10: Granby Public Schools**  **Math Median Student Growth Percentile, 2014–2017** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **N (2017)** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr change** | **State (2017)** |
| 3 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| 4 | 47 | 68.0 | 53.5 | 64.0 | 42.0 | -26.0 | 50.0 |
| 5 | 62 | 63.5 | 58.0 | 48.0 | 47.5 | -16.0 | 50.0 |
| 6 | 51 | 67.0 | 66.0 | 88.0 | 79.0 | 12.0 | 50.0 |
| 7 | 70 | 18.0 | 20.0 | 18.0 | 11.5 | -6.5 | 50.0 |
| 8 | 57 | 48.0 | 55.5 | 53.0 | 33.0 | -15.0 | 50.0 |
| 10 | 45 | 45.5 | 59.0 | 40.0 | 59.0 | 13.5 | 50.0 |
| Changes in SGP of 10 points or more are considered meaningful. | | | | | | | |

**In ELA, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment was 40 percent in the 3rd grade at West Street, and was 49, 44, and 51 percent in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades, respectively, at East Meadow. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment was 51 and 21 percent in the 7th and 8th grades, respectively, at Granby Junior Senior High.**

| **Table 11: Granby Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2017** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **3–8** |
| West Street | 40% | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 40% |
| East Meadow | -- | 49% | 44% | 51% | -- | -- | 48% |
| Granby Junior Senior High | -- | -- | -- | -- | 51% | 21% | 38% |
| District | 40% | 48% | 44% | 50% | 51% | 20% | 43% |
| State | 47% | 48% | 49% | 51% | 50% | 49% | 49% |

**In math, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment was 36 percent in the 3rd grade at West Street, and was 43, 27, and 60 percent in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades, respectively, at East Meadow. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 43 and 21 percent in the 7th and 8th grades, respectively, at Granby Junior Senior High.**

| **Table 12: Granby Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2017** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **3–8** |
| West Street | 36% | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 36% |
| East Meadow | -- | 43% | 27% | 60% | -- | -- | 43% |
| Granby Junior Senior High | -- | -- | -- | -- | 43% | 21% | 33% |
| District | 36% | 42% | 27% | 59% | 43% | 20% | 38% |
| State | 49% | 49% | 46% | 50% | 47% | 48% | 48% |

**On the MCAS assessment in the 10th grade, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced at Granby Junior Senior High was above the state rate by 7 percentage points in ELA and above the state rate by 1 percentage point in math**.

| **Table 13: Granby Public Schools**  **MCAS ELA and Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2017** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **ELA** | **Math** |
| Granby Junior Senior High | 98% | 80% |
| State | 91% | 79% |

**In science, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the MCAS assessment was 46 percent in the 5th grade at East Meadow, 26 percent in the 8th grade, and 78 percent in the 10th grade at Granby Junior Senior High.**

| **Table 14: Granby Public Schools**  **MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced by School and Grade, 2017** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **10** | **Total** |
| West Street | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| East Meadow | -- | -- | 46% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 46% |
| Granby Junior Senior High | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 26% | 78% | 49% |
| District | -- | -- | 46% | -- | -- | 25% | 78% | 48% |
| State | -- | -- | 46% | -- | -- | 40% | 74% | 53% |

**In ELA, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment ranged from 38 to 48 percent in the district’s schools.**

* The percentage of high needs students meeting or exceeding expectations was 25 percent in the district’s schools.
* The percentage of economically disadvantaged students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 26 to 32 percent in the district’s schools.
* The percentage of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 10 to 17 percent in the district’s schools.
* The percentage of English language learners meeting or exceeding expectations was 30 percent at East Meadow and 27 percent in the district as a whole.

**In math, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Generation MCAS assessment ranged from 33 to 43 percent in the district’s schools.**

* The percentage of high needs students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 19 to 23 percent in the district’s schools.
* The percentage of economically disadvantaged students meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 19 to 24 percent in the district’s schools.
* The percentage of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations ranged from 11 to 13 percent in the district’s schools.
* The percentage of English language learners meeting or exceeding expectations was 30 percent at East Meadow and 27 percent in the district as a whole.

| **Table 15: Granby Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA and Math Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations by School, 2017** | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **ELA** | | | | | **Math** | | | | |
| **School** | **All** | **High Needs** | **Econ. Dis.** | **SWD** | **ELLs** | **All** | **High Needs** | **Econ. Dis.** | **SWD** | **ELLs** |
| West Street | 40% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 36% | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| East Meadow | 48% | 26% | 32% | 10% | 30% | 43% | 23% | 24% | 13% | 30% |
| Granby Junior Senior High | 38% | 26% | 26% | 17% | -- | 33% | 19% | 19% | 11% | -- |
| District | 43% | 25% | 28% | 13% | 27% | 38% | 22% | 24% | 13% | 27% |

**Between 2014 and 2017, ELA proficiency at Granby Junior Senior High improved by 7 percentage points for all students and by 19 percentage points for high needs students.**

**Between 2014 and 2017, math proficiency at Granby Junior Senior High improved for all students by 3 percentage points and by 6 percentage points for high needs students.**

| **Table 16: Granby Public Schools**  **MCAS ELA and Math Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grade 10, 2014-2017** | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **ELA** | | | | | **Math** | | | | |
| **School** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** |
| Granby Junior Senior High | 91% | 99% | 91% | 98% | 7 | 77% | 87% | 72% | 80% | 3 |
| High Needs | 75% | 95% | 79% | 94% | 19 | 57% | 62% | 32% | 63% | 6 |
| Econ. Dis. | -- | 92% | 79% | 92% | -- | -- | 69% | 36% | 62% | -- |
| ELLs | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| SWD | 45% | 92% | -- | -- | -- | 27% | 46% | -- | -- | -- |

**Between 2014 and 2017, in science, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the MCAS assessment declined by 13 percentage points in East Meadow, and improved by 2 percentage points at Granby Junior Senior High.**

* Science proficiency for high needs students declined by 3 percentage points at East Meadow, and improved by 5 percentage points at Granby Junior Senior High.
* In 2017, science proficiency for economically disadvantaged students was 27 percent at East Meadow, and 31 percent at Granby Junior Senior High.
* In 2017, science proficiency for students with disabilities was 8 percent at East Meadow and 21 percent at Granby Junior Senior High.

| **Table 17: Granby Public Schools**  **MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Science by School and Subgroup, 2014–2017** | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **N (2017)** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** |
| West Street | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| East Meadow | 63 | 59% | 72% | 65% | 46% | -13 |
| High Needs | 20 | 33% | 60% | 46% | 30% | -3 |
| Econ. Dis. | 11 | -- | 50% | 56% | 27% | -- |
| SWD | 12 | -- | 64% | 30% | 8% | -- |
| ELLs | 5 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Granby Junior Senior High | 104 | 47% | 65% | 51% | 49% | 2 |
| High Needs | 37 | 25% | 45% | 30% | 30% | 5 |
| Econ. Dis. | 26 | -- | 61% | 39% | 31% | -- |
| SWD | 19 | 5% | 14% | 13% | 21% | 16 |
| ELLs | 4 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |

**Between 2014 and 2017, the district’s four-year cohort graduation rate for all students declined 1.4 percentage points from 96.5 percent in 2014 to 95.1 percent in 2017, above the state rate of 88.3 percent. In 2017, the four-year cohort graduation rate was above the state rate for each subgroup with reportable data.**

| **Table 18: Granby Public Schools**  **Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2014–2017** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **N**  **(2017)** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2017)** |
| High needs | 33 | 93.8% | 86.1% | 88.9% | 90.9% | -2.9 | 80.0% |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 23 | 100.0% | 86.7% | 90.3% | 91.3% | -8.7 | 79.0% |
| ELLs | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 63.4% |
| SWD | 16 | 88.9% | 73.7% | 80.0% | 93.8% | 4.9 | 72.8% |
| African American | 2 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 80.0% |
| Asian | 3 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 94.1% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 3 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 74.4% |
| Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat. | 3 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 85.2% |
| White | 71 | 96.1% | 92.0% | 91.9% | 95.8% | -0.3 | 92.6% |
| All | 82 | 96.5% | 92.4% | 92.0% | 95.1% | -1.4 | 88.3% |
| \* Four-year cohort graduation rate for students from low income families used for 2014 and 2015 rates. | | | | | | | |

**Between 2013 and 2016, the district’s five-year cohort graduation rate decreased by 6.7 percentage points for all students, from 100 percent in 2013 to 93.3 percent in 2016, and decreased for each subgroup with reportable data.**

| **Table 19: Granby Public Schools**  **Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2013–2016** | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **N**  **(2016)** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2016)** |
| High needs | 36 | 100% | 93.8% | 88.9% | 91.7% | -8.3 | 82.9% |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 31 | 100% | 100.0% | 86.7% | 93.5% | -6.5 | 82.1% |
| ELLs | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 70.9% |
| SWD | 15 | 100% | 88.9% | 78.9% | 86.7% | -13.3 | 76.5% |
| African American | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 83.4% |
| Asian | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 94.8% |
| Hispanic or Latino | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 76.8% |
| Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat. | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 87.4% |
| White | 74 | 100% | 96.1% | 93.3% | 93.2% | -6.8 | 93.5% |
| All | 75 | 100% | 96.5% | 93.7% | 93.3% | -6.7 | 89.8% |
| \* Five-year cohort graduation rate for students from low income families used for 2013 and 2014 rates. | | | | | | | |

**In 2017, the in-school suspension rate for all students was 0.1 percent, below the state rate of 1.7 percent. The in-school suspension rate for each subgroup with reportable data was also below the state rate.**

| **Table 20: Granby Public Schools**  **In-School Suspension Rates by Subgroup, 2014–2017** | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2017)** |
| High Needs | 0.0% | 1.3% | 6.1% | 0.4% | 0.4 | 2.6% |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 0.0% | 2.1% | 7.6% | 0.5% | 0.5 | 2.9% |
| ELLs | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 1.7% |
| SWD | -- | 1.4% | 6.7% | -- | -- | 3.1% |
| African American | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 3.3% |
| Asian | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 0.5% |
| Hispanic or Latino | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 2.5% |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 2.1% |
| White | 0.1% | 0.6% | 3.2% | 0.1% | 0.0 | 1.3% |
| All | 0.1% | 0.7% | 3.2% | 0.1% | 0.0 | 1.7% |

\*Suspension rates for students from low income families used for 2014 rates.

**Between 2014 and 2017, out-of-school suspension rates increased for all students and for each subgroup with reportable data. In 2017, the out-of-school suspension rate was below or equal to the state rate for each group except for White students, which was above the state rate.**

| **Table 21: Granby Public Schools**  **Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Subgroup, 2014–2017** | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2017)** |
| High Needs | 2.6% | 3.2% | 3.5% | 4.3% | 1.7 | 4.5% |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 3.3% | 3.2% | 4.3% | 5.3% | 2.0 | 5.3% |
| ELLs | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 3.8% |
| SWD | -- | 4.1% | 4.4% | -- | -- | 5.5% |
| African American | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 6.3% |
| Asian | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 0.7% |
| Hispanic or Latino | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 5.2% |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 3.1% |
| White | 1.9% | 2.0% | 1.7% | 2.7% | 0.8 | 1.6% |
| All | 1.7% | 2.1% | 1.8% | 2.7% | 1.0 | 2.8% |

\* Suspension rates for students from low income families used for 2014 rates.

**Between 2014 and 2017, the district’s dropout rate increased for each group with reportable data except for Asian students. In 2017, the dropout rate for all students was 1.2 percent, below the state rate of 1.8 percent.**

| **Table 22: Granby Public Schools**  **Dropout Rates by Subgroup, 2014–2017** | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2017)** |
| High Needs | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.3% | 4.3% | 4.3 | 3.5% |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.1% | 6.8% | 6.8 | 3.6% |
| ELLs | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 6.5% |
| SWD | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.1% | 3.1 | 3.3% |
| African American | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 2.9% |
| Asian | 0.0% | -- | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0 | 0.6% |
| Hispanic or Latino | -- | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | -- | 4.2% |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic or Latino | 0.0% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 1.7% |
| White | 0.0% | 0.4% | 0.8% | 1.4% | 1.4 | 1.1% |
| All | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.7% | 1.2% | 1.2 | 1.8% |
| \*Dropout rates for students from low income families used for 2014 rates. | | | | | | |

Leadership and Governance

Contextual Background

Each of the four district leaders in the Granby Public Schools is a relative newcomer to the district. In the spring of 2016, the school committee hired the superintendent to replace an interim leader. In the summer of 2016, the new superintendent hired the elementary school principal to serve the East Meadow and West Street elementary schools. In the summer of 2016, the superintendent hired the director of pupil services. In July 2017, the superintendent brought on the new secondary principal.

These four people—the superintendent, two principals, and the director of pupil services—function as the instructional and program leaders of the district. In a relatively short time, they have established strong working ties to one another, introduced a range of leadership approaches to improve instruction, focused on raising expectations, offered leadership opportunities to teachers, begun to improve the implementation and effectiveness of the educator evaluation system, and laid the foundation for district and school improvement planning.

School committee members work closely with the administration, set budget and policy, and conduct regular evaluations of the superintendent. The school committee is widely perceived as a stable, constructive leadership body that works well with both the administration and the teachers’ association, which represents teachers and paraprofessionals.

At the time of the onsite review, the district was operating without an annual district improvement or action plan. Its 2015–2018 strategic plan and 2017–2018 School Improvement Plans (SIPs) did not include student achievement data/analysis, SMART goals,[[5]](#footnote-5) and clear lines of responsibility.The superintendent, principals, and the director of pupil services, working with a team of stakeholders, had drafted a three-year strategic plan, with goals in the areas of student achievement, school-community collaboration, social-emotional-physical development, and district funding and sustainability. Each goal includes Objectives, Strategies, Persons Responsible, and Timelines. The draft builds on the superintendent’s July 2017 Report of Entry Plan Findings on all six standards governing districts. Leaders told the team that they expected to base new school improvement plans (SIPs) on the strategic plan. District and school leaders have produced a series of targeted, small-scale “plans”, which could help to shape a strategic plan or SIP.

School committee members and district leaders interact periodically with town managers, the town volunteer finance committee, and town meeting members in an effort to address the educational and financial challenges that the district and town face. These exchanges often highlight the tension between district leaders and town officials.

Strength Finding

* + 1. **District leaders are exercising decisive leadership, acting as a team, developing the leadership skills of educators, and supporting educators as together they implement the district’s emerging improvement strategies.**
  1. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district’s leadership team has taken steps to improve district performance on multiple standards.
     1. In 2016–2017, the superintendent designed and conducted an entry plan, and published a year-end report detailing her findings and posing key strategic questions. She challenged district leaders and stakeholders to embrace improvement efforts in each of ESE’s District Standards and Indicators: Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, Student Support, Human Resources and Professional Development, and Financial and Asset Management.
     2. In their respective first years (2016–2017 for the elementary principal and 2017–2018 for the principal of the junior senior high school), each principal launched instructional leadership teams (ILTs), asking participating teachers to exercise new levels of initiative and leadership. Each ILT has provided faculty with professional development (PD), which teachers co-designed and co-led. Each school’s ILT plans to increase its leadership of PD in 2018–2019.

a. Leaders have asked faculty to assume instructional leadership roles through the ILTs. Interviewees told the team that this was a major step, one that required trust-building, testing of new approaches, and incremental successes.

b. Principals told the review team that they have stressed to ILT members that they, the principals, served as members of the ILTs, were not the leaders of the ILTs, and that principals left decision-making in the ILTs to the teachers.

3. The director of pupil services has taken steps to re-organize and focus the district’s support of student learning: developed closer working ties to families of students with disabilities, provided training in differentiation to establish the expectation that teachers would differentiate instruction, put staff in place to provide struggling students with in-class support, and developed a district curriculum accommodation plan.

**B.** The leadership team is focused on raising expectations. Multiple leaders said that Granby had not absorbed some innovations in teaching and learning common in other parts of the state. In their view, “things stood still,” or “20 years went by.” For example, leaders stated that the district had not fostered a growth mindset among students and educators and that secondary teachers tended to lecture instead of engaging students in active learning. One leader pointed out that the task of leaders was to challenge the idea that if students were achieving at high levels, why did educators have to change? This leader told the review team that he has had to ask, “Why can’t we be great?”

**C.** District leaders expressed the belief that their best chance of success was the development of a culture of shared leadership that included and was fully embraced by teachers and students. This distributive leadership approach represents a departure for many, and challenges leaders as they try to be strategists, initiators and problem-solvers without pre-empting the ideas and initiative of teachers.

* + 1. These efforts to develop teacher leadership have some history to build on; a number of faculty have a tradition of service as department heads and team leaders. Even though the positions of department heads and team leaders have been eliminated through budget cuts, some teachers voluntarily serve in these roles.
    2. A long-term goal of the leadership team is to energize and transform the culture of student learning so that students “do more heavy lifting,” and receive more opportunities to take responsibility for their learning and development.

**Impact**: The leadership team is making incremental changes in expectations, practices, and school culture in the district. If sustained over time, and supported by other changes suggested below, this leadership approach will likely increase the district’s capacity to effect improvements across all standards‑‑‑and ultimately to improve student achievement.

**Challenges and Areas for Growth**

**2. District leaders and town officials have not developed a systemic approach for collaboratively addressing the educational and financial challenges that the district and the town face. They acknowledged the tensions between them, and were anxious to improve the situation, without being sure how to do so.**

**A.** The superintendent, school committee members, educators, and elected and appointed town officials stated in interviews and focus groups that the relationships between district leaders and town officials were challenging, frequently led to disagreements that surfaced in public meetings, and were hindering progress.

**B.** District leaders said, and town officials confirmed, that they did not regularly hold meetings or discuss financial matters. While district leaders and town officials have agreed, in principle, to have quarterly meetings, these have not become routine.

1. Interviewees told the team that it was not unusual for major program and financial decisions to be brought to the floor of town meeting, without the benefit of prior in-depth meetings, conversations, or deliberations between district leaders and town officials.

**C.** District leaders and town officials expressed a common desire for improved communication.

1. District leaders expressed a desire for more frequent opportunities to meet and work with town officials. In her July 2017 Entry Plan Findings Report, the superintendent expressed the view that such communication was essential to “promote the public confidence, community support, and financial commitment needed to achieve high performance by students and staff.”
2. Town officials expressed an interest in having better communication with district leaders. They said that high turnover in district leadership in recent years had been a barrier to communication. One town official expressed eagerness to build a better relationship with the superintendent, noting that the district and the town had forged successful, trusting relationships during periods of stable district leadership.

**Impact:** The difficulties in the relationship between district leaders and town officials have reduced the communication needed to consider the best ways to provide the best educational opportunities for all students.

**Recommendation**

**The school committee, superintendent, and town leaders should work together to forge a new approach to district-town collaboration.**

1. The superintendent and town manager should map out a set of norms and practices for town-district interaction over educational and financial matters.
2. District leaders should strive to ensure that the educational vision and priorities of the district are always actively applied to financial planning and deliberations. Town leaders should detail the kinds of data and information they require, and why.
3. District and town leaders should hold regularly scheduled meetings and establish information-sharing routines that allow for substantive prior conversations and opportunities to raise concerns, clarify uncertainties, and build communication and trust.
   1. Leaders should consider:
      1. Committing to monthly meetings between the superintendent and town manager
      2. Committing to schedule and reliably hold quarterly meetings between the town manager, the school committee, the superintendent, the select board and any leaders the town manager or superintendent deem necessary
      3. Including in the purposes of these meetings the express goals of increasing transparency, raising levels of communication, surfacing and jointly addressing difficulties or hard questions in advance of public meetings, and building and sustaining new levels of trust and mutuality
4. The school committee and superintendent should work together to improve the district’s overall collaborative practices with the town.
   * + 1. These leaders should co-create and articulate an approach to district-town collaboration and communication that is guided and informed by their educational vision, and that is responsive to the data requests of town leadership.
       2. These leaders should also update the job description for superintendent from its current 2005 version, specifically including language defining the role of the superintendent in establishing and maintaining positive and effective working relationships with the town manager and other town leaders.

**Benefits:** School and district leaders who work closely with town leaders stand a far better chance of addressing the hopes and informing the deliberations of town residents, while also successfully discharging their educational and leadership responsibilities. Town leaders who work effectively with their school district leadership increase their chances of solving long-term financial and program challenges. Leaders who frankly acknowledge the difficulties they have had working together and who set out to improve communication and trust can substantially improve the impact of their work, and increase their long-term, joint capacity to solve problems, and take on new challenges.

**Recommended resource:**

* The *District Governance Program* (<https://www.masc.org/field-services/district-governance-project>), provided by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, is designed to focus on continuous improvement and to build understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the school committee and the superintendent.

Instruction

Contextual Background

Primary responsibility for instruction lies with the district’s administrative team. As a result of several factors, including declining enrollment, budgetary restrictions, administrator and teacher turnover, and a declining number of instructional staff, teachers are not always provided the support they need and many depend on colleagues for instructional support.

Elementary teachers said that they did not have an instructional leader and shared curriculum and instruction work with each other. Junior senior high teachers said that the principal was their instructional leader. The loss of department heads at the junior senior high school as a result of budgetary restrictions has reduced curriculum and instruction support for teachers at that school. However, several former department heads voluntarily lead monthly subject core content meetings.

Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) at each school are beginning to empower teacher leaders to monitor and improve instruction. ILT goals include setting the mission and vision of the school, creating common goals for collaborative teams, engaging in inquiry related to current research on instructional best practices, and ensuring that instruction is motivating and engaging.

At the time of the onsite review in March 2018, through the new administration, many initiatives were in the initial stages of planning or implementation. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) had begun at the elementary level Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) were in their first full year of implementation, with a focus on planning and development to enhance instruction. Members of the review team attended ILT sessions at the elementary, junior high, and senior high-school levels. A draft strategic plan includes three objectives related to instruction. One focuses on the ILT process; another on curriculum, instruction and assessment; and a third on resources.

In addition, the superintendent and administrators were in their first full year of conducting learning walkthroughs, with a focus on identifying trends in observed instruction and discussing trends with teachers. Administrators told the team that they were looking at student engagement, instructional strategies, and behavior management. Administrators said that they shared feedback with teachers about the “positive things” they had seen during walkthroughs, including small groups and project work in lessons, but noted that they saw “a lot of direct instruction.” Administrators told the team that they gave teachers instructional expectations but did not tell them “how to get there.”

In recent years the district has done little systemwide curriculum review, revision, or alignment. Curriculum is not vertically or horizontally aligned, and some textbooks date to the 1990s. In its self-assessment submitted in advance of the onsite review, the district rated itself “Somewhat well” on the indicator “Curriculum guides are vertically aligned, with particular attention to transition points (e.g., from elementary to middle and middle to high school).” (Possible answers are “Very Well,” “Well,” “Somewhat well,” and “Not at all well.”)

Staff at the West Elementary School reported that the school did not have Internet access. Teachers at the school expressed concern about how grade 3 students would fare when they were required to complete the MCAS assessment in the spring without having practiced using computers to respond to questions. Infrastructure remains an issue at the junior senior high school with most classrooms only having two electrical sockets. In addition, teachers planning to use the Internet for lessons must notify the technology director in advance so that connections to other parts of the building can be shut off in order to provide enough Internet capacity. Team members observed two computer labs at the junior senior high school in use throughout the review. However, most computers do not support new operating systems.

Strength Finding

**1. In most observed elementary classes, team members noted a high incidence of teachers’ knowledge of subject matter, of classroom routines and positive supports in place to ensure that students behave appropriately, of appropriate classroom strategies well matched to learning objectives, of a classroom climate that is conducive to teaching and learning, and of students engaged in learning.**

1. Team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence of classroom routines and positive supports being in place to ensure that students behave appropriately (characteristic #11) in 93 percent of elementary classrooms.
   * + 1. In a grade 2 class, the teacher used a single, soft chime to transition students to the next activity. Students worked in teams and pairs during the class. The teacher circulated throughout the class, asking students to explain their work and offering encouragement.
2. Team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence of classroom climate conducive to teaching and learning (characteristic #12) and teachers using appropriate classroom activities well-matched to learning objectives (characteristic #3) in 100 percent of elementary classes.

A grade 4 math class was observed at the beginning of the day. A schedule was on the board for students to follow.

Students in a grade 6 classroom were doing a Google search with their Chrome books. They completed an interactive activity about Egyptian mummification. The teacher moved throughout the classroom, assisting students and asking questions. She referred to the goals of the lesson on several occasions.

1. Team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence of the teacher demonstrating knowledge of subject matter (characteristic #1) in 100 percent of elementary classrooms.

Students in a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) class were building rollercoasters for marbles. The teacher provided guidance and assistance with the project. The students used poster board, cardboard tubes, and floor space. The teacher worked with the students to develop a set of team strategies and construction projects. The lesson included problem solving, analysis, testing solutions, design, planning, and delegating/sharing.

1. Team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence of students given opportunities to assume responsibility to learn and being engaged in the lesson (characteristic #5) in 85 percent of elementary classes.
   * + 1. Students in a grade 1 classroom were writing stories. All students were engaged and taking responsibility for their work without the teacher dominating the activity.

**Impact:** When classroom routines and positive supports and a classroom climate conducive to teaching and learning are in place and teachers demonstrate knowledge of subject matter and use appropriate classroom strategies well-matched to learning objectives, the district has established a strong foundation for teaching and learning.

**Challenges and Areas for Growth**

**2.**  **In observed classrooms, the quality and rigor of instruction varied across the district, and instruction often did not challenge students.** **Although team members observed some examples of excellence, there was a generally lower incidence of effective instruction at the middle and high-school levels than at the elementary level.**

**A.** Team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence that the teacher conducts frequent checks for student understanding, provides, feedback, and adjusts instruction (characteristic #4) in 79 percent of elementary classrooms, in 33 percent of middle-school level classrooms, and in 31 percent of high-school level classrooms.

1. In a grade 2 math class, the teacher moved from student to student, posing questions and asking students to explain their work.

2. In contrast, in a grade 7 math class the teacher did not call on individual students; instead the teacher relied on unison responses to questions or students who volunteered responses to questions. In this classroom, most students did not ask or answer questions.

**B.** Review team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence of students engaged in higher-order thinking (characteristic #6) in only 36 percent of elementary classes, in 50 percent of middle-school level classes, and in only 8 percent of high-school level classes.

1. A high-school level class included a lecture and a short video presentation of the plot of the novel that students were studying. The teacher provided all the explanations. Students responded to occasional questions.

2. In contrast, in a middle-school level science class, observers noted students designing, planning, delegating/sharing, solving problems, analyzing, and testing solutions.

**C.** Team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence of students communicating their ideas and thinking with each other (characteristic #7) in 50 percent of elementary classes, in only 33 percent of middle-school level classes, and in just 15 percent of high-school level classes.

1. In a high-school class, the teacher presented a lecture on a case study. The class was mostly lecture and teacher directed. There was limited opportunity for students to communicate their ideas and thinking with each other.

2. In contrast, in a middle-school level classroom where students communicated their ideas and thinking with other, students moved to groups and “turned and talked” for several minutes.

**D**. Team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence of teachers using a variety of instructional strategies (characteristic #10) in 64 percent of elementary lessons, in 50 percent of middle-school level lessons, and in only 8 percent of high-school level classes.

In a high-school math class, students had a worksheet for review before a quiz the following day. The teacher selected a problem from the worksheet, wrote it on the whiteboard, solved the problem, and then moved on to the next problem. Students copied the correct solution into a notebook or onto their worksheets. Occasionally, the teacher asked a question. The teacher called on only three students from the class to respond.

In contrast, in a high-school Spanish class, the teacher used multiple instructional techniques, including coaching, observing, online tools (Google classroom, online composition, creating shared texts to allow students to learn from one another), discussion, reflection, and self-direction.

**E.** Team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence of classroom routines and positive supports in place to ensure that students behave appropriately (characteristic #11) in 93 percent of elementary lessons, in 66 percent of middle-school level lessons, and in just 15 percent of high-school level classrooms.

* 1. In a middle-school level class, observers noted extensive student chatter and off-task behavior. Many students did not focus on the lesson and the teacher did not provide positive redirection when students misbehaved.
  2. In a high-school level ELL class in which classroom routines and positive supports were in place, the teacher checked in with the students about their understanding of terms used in class and how they were getting along with classmates, consistently reinforcing individualized instruction with positive remarks. While working with the students on an assignment for a general education class, the teacher recognized the challenges of the work and identified for the students a variety of ways to be successful in meeting the challenges.

**Impact**: When effective, research-based instructional practices are not established districtwide, students do not benefit from a variety of instructional strategies and do not have sufficient opportunities to engage in higher-order thinking and to communicate their ideas. Without the implementation of multiple assessments to check for understanding, teachers cannot determine the extent to which information has been learned or understood or ensure that all students’ learning needs are addressed. Ultimately, the district cannot ensure that students are sufficiently prepared to achieve at high levels.

**Recommendation**

**The district should improve instruction by establishing and communicating specific expectations for high-quality instruction.**

1. As part of the supervision and evaluation process, the district should provide guidance, support, and actionable feedback to teachers focused on providing opportunities for students to use higher-order thinking skills, challenging all students regardless of learning needs, using a variety of instructional strategies, and managing classrooms.
2. The district should expand walk-throughs by including teachers in the process in a meaningful and systematic way.
3. The district should consider using the ILT structure to fully articulate and define expectations for high-quality instruction.

1. Instructional expectations should be defined in conjunction with curriculum revision and alignment.

2. Expectations should be communicated widely to ensure a shared understanding of high-quality instruction and the steps the district will take to achieve it in every classroom.

1. The district could also use grade-level, department and/or faculty meetings, and embedded professional development to support instruction.

1**.** The district should focus professional development planning on improving rigor by providing teachers with guidance and support focused how to challenge students to use higher-order thinking skills and communicate their ideas.

1. The district should support teacher leadership and growth by creating opportunities for staff to observed and learn from exemplary teachers, particularly as they demonstrate the district’s instructional expectations.

1. This could include increased time and support for peer observations.

**Benefits:** Implementing this recommendation will provide administrators, teachers, staff and students with clear and articulated expectations of what constitutes high-quality instruction. The ILT can be a positive resource to leverage districtwide improvement. A good district that prioritizes high-quality instruction for all students becomes a great district by creating a culture of continuous improvement, resulting in professional growth and increased student achievement.

**Recommended resources:**

* ESE’s *"What to Look For" Observation Guides* ***(Updated August 2017)*** (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/observation/>) describe what observers should expect to see in a classroom at a particular grade level in a specific subject area. This includes the knowledge and skills students should be learning and using (as reflected in state learning standards) and best practices related to classroom curriculum, instruction, and assessment for each subject area. The guides are not designed to replace any evaluation system or tools districts currently use but are a resource to help classroom observers efficiently identify what teachers and students should be experiencing in specific subjects and grade levels.
* ESE’s Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/implementation-guide.docx>) is a resource to support instructional leaders in establishing a Learning Walkthrough process in a school or district. It is designed to provide guidance to those working in an established culture of collaboration as well as those who are just beginning to observe classrooms and discuss teaching and learning in a focused and actionable manner.
  + Appendix 4, Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/continuum-practice.pdf>) is a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning.
* ESE’s *Online Calibration Training Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/calibration/tool/>) uses videos of classroom instruction from ESE’s Calibration Video Library to simulate brief, unannounced observations. Groups of educators, such as a district leadership team, watch a video together and then individually assess the educator’s practice related to specific elements from the Model Classroom Teacher Rubric and provide the educator with written feedback. Through real-time data displays, the group members can then see how their conclusions compare to each other, as well educators throughout the state.
* ESE’s *Calibration Video Library* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/calibration/>) is a collection of professionally created videos of classroom instruction produced by the School Improvement Network. These videos depict a range of practice (this is NOT a collection of exemplars) to support within-district calibration activities that promote a shared understanding of instructional quality and rigor.

Human Resources and Professional Development

In the summer of 2016, a new superintendent was appointed. Key stakeholders, including the school committee, teachers, and parents, told the review team that the superintendent has assembled a team of school and district leaders who have established a strong working relationship and begun to develop plans and strategies to improve teaching and learning in the district.

Educator evaluation and professional development are typical linchpins of successful school improvement initiatives. Evidence from this ESE review indicated that the district has recognized the importance of these key systems and has taken steps to improve their implementation and effectiveness. The recommendations in this report are intended to inform and support those efforts, and to provide clear direction to ensure enhanced outcomes.

**Challenges and Areas for Growth**

1. **The district has not achieved consistency in the implementation of its educator evaluation system.**
   1. Although the district has complied with the procedural and technical requirements of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework, the quality of its implementation has been uneven and inconsistent.
2. Team members reviewed the evaluative documents of 30 teachers randomly selected from across the district for school years 2015–2016 and 2016–2017. This represents approximately half of all the district’s classroom teachers and includes an equal number of elementary and secondary staff.
3. All evaluative documents, including goals, self-assessments, evidence, and formative assessments/evaluations and summative evaluations had been completed and submitted in a timely manner. In many cases, however, teachers’ professional goals had not been developed according to SMART[[6]](#footnote-6) goal rubrics. Formative assessments/evaluations and summative evaluations were generally evidence based but frequently were only minimally informative. [[7]](#footnote-7) Evidence was vague, generic, repeated on multiple evaluations, or a verbatim restatement of educator evaluation standards for teaching practice.
4. Some teacher evaluations provided instructive feedback and actionable recommendations for improved classroom practice. The great majority, however, did not contain pedagogical suggestions or clear, specific feedback for improving teaching methodologies, promoting professional growth, or advancing student learning outcomes.

a. In a number of cases, feedback was congratulatory.

1. Interviewees said that the quality of supervisory practices varied widely across the district. Some teachers stated that they were now receiving more frequent classroom observations along with more timely and meaningful feedback than in the past. Others, however, stated that they seldom saw their evaluator and/or rarely received feedback that was specific, useful, and actionable.

5. The review team did not find evidence that administrators had received evaluations for school years 2015–2016 and 2016–2017.

6. Administrators told the team that historically the educator evaluation system had not been implemented effectively within the district. The superintendent told the team that a disproportionately high percentage of staff had been rated “exemplary.”

7. District and school leaders acknowledged that the absence of formal and ongoing training to improve supervisory skills and enhance evaluative competencies and capacity, the limited use/availability of student assessment data, the absence of a joint educator evaluation committee to monitor and communicate progress in implementation, and significant inequities in the current supervisory responsibilities of principals, were impediments to progress.

**Impact**: Supervisory practices and evaluations of consistently high quality and efficacy are essential administrative tools for improving classroom instruction, promoting professional growth, and ultimately for increasing student learning outcomes and academic achievement. By missing opportunities to ensure that all educators’ evaluations are evidence based and growth oriented, and that classroom observations and teacher feedback are of sufficient frequency and value, the district is challenged to realize the potential of and achieve the full benefits of its educator evaluation system.

**The district is in the early stages of taking action on the components of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework that require the collection and use of feedback and multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement in the teacher evaluation process.**

**A.** As of the 2015–2016 school year, state educator evaluation regulations (603 CMR 35.07) call for all districts to collect and use student feedback as evidence in the teacher evaluation process and staff feedback as evidence in the administrator evaluation process.[[8]](#footnote-8) This feedback may also be used to inform an educator’s self-assessment, goal setting, or as evidence to demonstrate growth over time.

1. Administrators said that the superintendent strongly supported this initiative. They stated that in spring 2017, all teachers were asked to submit feedback on their principals to the superintendent. Those results were subsequently shared with faculty. They further stated that the superintendent had invited teachers and administrators to provide feedback on her performance. Interviewees told the team that feedback had not been used as evidence in the administrator evaluation process.
   1. At the time of the onsite review in March 2018, interviewees said that the district hoped to introduce student feedback surveys in spring 2018, noting that negotiations were underway with the teachers’ association to determine how to proceed with incorporating this feedback into teacher evaluations.

**B.** The educator evaluation regulations also call for districts to develop and use multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement, including common assessments, to assess student learning and to inform judgments about educators’ impact.

Administrators told the team that common assessment data were not used as evidence in the teacher evaluation process, and said that they were not aware of any formal district plans to do so.

**Impact**: By not fully taking action on these components of the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework, the district is limited in its ability to effectively identify educators’ strengths and opportunities for growth and to help them continuously improve. This ultimately limits’ students’ opportunities to receive instruction that is high-quality and continuously improving.

* + 1. **The district does not have a comprehensive, data-driven professional development program that is collaboratively developed, with clear and measurable goals based on district and school priorities.**

1. Interviews with district and school leaders and a document review indicated that the district does not have a professional development (PD) program that has clear and measurable goals and objectives that are aligned with district and school goals and priorities; that is developed collaboratively with educators using multiple sources of student and educator data; and that is evaluated for effectiveness.
2. The district does not have a formal PD steering committee or designated leadership group to plan and coordinate PD. The teachers’ collective bargaining agreement states, “A committee consisting of an equal number of representatives from management and the union will give input to the superintendent regarding the development of district PD offerings.” However, the superintendent and her leadership team, which includes the principals and the director of pupil services, direct the PD program as part of their broader administrative responsibilities.
   1. Administrators acknowledged the need to include teachers actively and directly in the development of PD. They stated that the district’s goal was to shift PD leadership to the newly formed school-based Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) in the 2018–2019 school year. They said that these teacher teams would work closely with their principals to align resources, provide coaching to support classroom instruction, and direct the PD program.
3. Administrators said that the superintendent was developing a comprehensive strategic plan for the district with which new SIPs would be aligned and from which a comprehensive PD program could be developed.
4. Interviewees expressed concern about the adequacy of resources to properly support and sustain PD programs and services.
5. The district has begun to survey teachers to inform decisions about PD needs and goals but has not created a uniform process to enable teachers to assess PD to measure progress and improve quality.
6. Administrators stated that there was limited student performance data to inform PD goals and student learning needs. They said that the district would focus attention on that issue.[[9]](#footnote-9)
7. Interviewees said that the district’s mentoring program was not fully functional, noting that the district was developing a mentoring plan, based on ESE’s three-year mentoring model, for implementation in the 2018–2019 school year.

**Impact**: Without a collaboratively developed data-driven PD plan with measurable goals and priorities, the district is challenged to support all educators, advance district and school priorities, and improve instruction and student achievement.

**Recommendations**

**1. The district should continue and expand its efforts to fully and effectively implement all components of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework.**

**A.** Attention should focus on the need to improve the quality and consistency of supervisory practices and written evaluations, as well as the development of appropriate systems for the collection and use of multiple sources of evidence to properly inform and complete the evaluation process.

1. The district should implement systems and structures to ensure that all teachers are provided with regular and frequent classroom observations that are accompanied by concrete, targeted feedback for improved instructional practice. In addition, teachers and administrators should consistently receive formative assessments/evaluations and summative evaluations that provide meaningful and actionable recommendations with the capacity to contribute directly to professional growth and expanded capacity.

2. All evaluators should receive formal and on-going training, coaching, and other appropriate supports targeted to enhance their evaluative competencies.

a. The district should consider expanding its calibration and Learning Walk practices. Further, prioritized attention should be given to providing evaluators with additional structured activities designed to improve the quality, accuracy, and consistency of their classroom observations, evidence analyses, written descriptions of instructional practices, feedback strategies, and teacher ratings.

b. Appropriate procedures should be established to ensure that all formative assessments/evaluations and summative evaluations consistently provide teachers with substantive feedback and recommendations that are specific, actionable, and genuinely capable of improving classroom practice and promoting professional growth.

c. The district should consider widening the pool of supervisors as a means of providing teachers with more frequent classroom observations, increased support, and meaningful feedback.

3. The district should take meaningful steps to complete the implementation of the components of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework that require the collection and use of multiple sources of evidence to inform the evaluations of teachers and principals.

a. Standardized policies and procedures appropriate for the collection and use of student and staff feedback as evidence components of teacher and principal summary assessments should be collaboratively developed. In addition to informing evaluations, feedback could be incorporated in an educator’s self-assessment, goal setting, and/or used to demonstrate improvements in practice over time.

b. The district should develop an effective process, consistent with current state guidelines, whereby the results of common and standardized student assessments are included as a component of an educator’s evaluation. Although the recent amendment to the regulations eliminates the need to determine a separate student impact rating, evidence of student learning as a key element of an educator’s summary evaluation is still required.

4. The district should consider forming a joint educator evaluation committee to meet regularly and assume responsibility for guiding, monitoring and supporting the effective implementation of all elements of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework.

**Benefits:** By improving the quality and consistency of supervisory practices and evaluative products, the district will create a more effective mechanism with which to provide enriched learning experiences and increased academic achievement for all students. The implementation of the components of the state’s framework that require the collection and use of multiple sources of evidence to be used in evaluations will enable teachers and principals to reflect more accurately on their performance and thereby better identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth.

**Recommended resources:**

● Educator Evaluation Implementation Surveys for Teachers (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/implementation/TeachersSurvey.pdf>) and Administrators (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/implementation/AdministratorsSurvey.pdf>) are designed to provide schools and districts with information about the status of their educator evaluation implementation. Information from these surveys can be used to target district resources and supports where most needed to strengthen implementation.

● *On Track with Evaluator Capacity* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/pln/OnTrack-EvaluatorCapacity.pdf>) is an interactive document that provides specific strategies, lessons learned, and links to district-created resources. It was produced by eight districts that were part of a Professional Learning Network for Supporting Evaluator Capacity.

● *Quick Reference Guide: Opportunities to Streamline the Evaluation Process* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-Streamline.pdf>) is designed to help districts reflect on and continuously improve their evaluation systems.

● ESE’s Educator Evaluation Training Workshops (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/training/teachers/default.html>) provide a general overview to the educator evaluation framework plus opportunities to engage in activities associated with the first three steps of the 5-Step Cycle. This is a helpful resource for educators new to the educator evaluation framework.

● *Quick Reference Guide: Student and Staff Feedback* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-Feedback.pdf>) provides information about how to select feedback instruments and use feedback as part of the educator evaluation system, along with links to relevant resources.

* + 1. **The district’s professional development should be characterized by a strong and collaborative leadership structure which assumes responsibility for the comprehensive planning and coordination of programs and supports that are aligned with and directly support district priorities, individual school goals, and the needs of educators.**

1. The district’s new professional development (PD) model should focus on systematically promoting the instructional practices and professional growth of staff, advancing clearly defined district and school priorities, and improving student outcomes and achievement. It should be fully aligned with ESE’s Standards for Professional Development, with particular focus on the following.

The district should consider creating a joint committee composed of administrators and teacher representatives from the elementary, middle-, and high-school levels. Its role would be to develop and coordinate district wide PD plans, programs, resources, and supports, as well as to annually develop, communicate, and monitor a comprehensive PD plan for the district.

The annual goals and objectives of the district PD plan should be specific, effectively communicated, and strategically aligned with the priorities articulated in the District Action Plan.

The district’s PD plans and practices should be informed by student outcome and achievement data. Similarly, student data should be used to determine the extent of progress toward PD goals and enable staff to assess the quality and effectiveness of PD programs.

The district should move forward with its current efforts to develop a new mentoring plan. The plan should be closely aligned with ESE’s “Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programs” and be operational for the 2018–2019 school year.

The district should conduct a comprehensive needs analysis to determine the actual funding required to properly support a comprehensive and fully effective PD program.

**Benefits**: The creation of an effective, collaborative, and well-defined PD leadership structure and PD plan will help ensure that district resources, including time, funding, personnel, support structures, and services are planned and deployed in a more coordinated, strategic, and systematic manner. The active involvement and formal collaboration of teachers, at both the school and district levels, in the PD planning process should also contribute directly to the creation of an authentic and powerful model of shared leadership and decision making within the district.

**Recommended resources:**

* *The Massachusetts Standards for Professional Development* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.pdf>) describe, identify, and characterize what high quality learning experiences should look like for educators.
* Professional development case studies (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/CaseStudies/>) highlight districts implementing meaningful professional development programs that support educators throughout the entire career continuum. Watch examples of PD programs that are job-embedded, teacher-led, data-driven, and aligned to educator and district needs.
* *Identifying Meaningful Professional Development* (<https://youtu.be/zhuFioO8GbQ>) is a video in which educators from three Massachusetts districts discuss the importance of targeted, meaningful professional development and the ways districts can use the evaluation process to identify the most effective PD supports for all educators.
  + - ESE’s *Induction and Mentoring* web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/mentor/resources.html>) includes links to guidance materials and several examples of induction and mentoring strategies and programs in Massachusetts districts.
    - The *2015 Guidelines for Induction & Mentoring Programs* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/mentor/guidelines.pdf>) provides updated information for how districts can develop, implement, and refine induction and mentoring programs for educators new to the profession, the district, and/or their roles.
    - *Collecting Stakeholder Feedback on Induction and Mentoring Programs* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/mentor/StakeholderFeedback.pdf>) is a resource for districts to use when considering components of an induction and mentoring program for which they would like to solicit stakeholder feedback.
    - The Working Group for Educator Excellence (WGEE), in partnership with ESE, compiled a list of *District Promising Practices and Tools* (<http://wgee.org/best-practices/promising-practices-by-district/>) that support seven levers of educator expertise:
  + Recruitment, Hiring and Placement
  + Comprehensive Induction
  + Professional Development
  + Supervision and Evaluation
  + Teacher Leadership
  + Organizational Structure
  + Adult Professional Culture

Financial and Asset Management

Contextual Background

In the 10 years before the onsite review in March 2018, the district exceeded required net school spending (NSS) by various percentages, from 2.4 percent in fiscal year 2008 to 11.2 percent in fiscal year 2009. The town has faced financial challenges with sharp declines in enrollment and the loss of revenue from a private landfill that closed in 2013.

The historical background of the recent financial difficulties includes the request by the Granby board of selectmen to the Department of Revenue (DOR) for a financial management review in 2005. The resulting report urged town officials to develop long-term plans with a focus on two areas: the upcoming loss of landfill revenue and capital improvements to town infrastructure. DOR recommended that the town discontinue the use of its substantial stabilization fund for operating expenses and use it for non-recurring expenses and/or capital improvements. In large part, town officials have followed DOR’s guidance not to use the stabilization fund for operating expenses. However, on occasion, these funds have been authorized through town meeting vote for operating purposes, including for school operating expenses.

At the time of the onsite review, the district had three schools: the junior senior high school, grades 7 to 12, built in 1960; East Meadow, grades 4 to 6, built in 1965; and West Street School, pre-kindergarten to grade 3, built in 1941. In 2010, voters defeated a proposed plan for a new junior senior high school. The district has not resubmitted a plan for a new junior senior high school. In April 2016, voters approved a $32 million plan for an addition and major renovation at East Meadow School with an anticipated completion date of fall 2018. At that time, students and staff at West Street School will relocate to East Meadow.

Since 2010, the district has outsourced its business operations to a consulting company. The consultant serving Granby works in the district offices two days a week. The business office also has a full-time payroll clerk and a part-time accounts payable clerk. The accounts payable clerk is the district’s previous full-time business manager who retired from that position and brings institutional knowledge and experience to the department.

**Strength Finding**

**In the face of declining enrollment in recent years, the district has made some significant adjustments in resource allocation.**

**A.** Between 2013 and 2017, the district’s enrollment declined by 254 students, a 25.1 percent decrease.

**B.** In the same period, the ranks of teachers declined by 23.1 FTEs (28.5 percent).

1. Between 2013 and 2017, Teacher FTEs per 100 students declined by 5 percent.

**C.** At the time of the onsite review in March 2018, the district was merging the combined student bodies and faculties of the district’s two elementary schools and expected to open the new elementary school by the fall 2018.

**Impact:** Declining enrollment is putting pressure on the district to reduce costs, as it has already done in the case of schools and teacher FTEs.

**Challenges and Areas for Growth**

**2. The junior senior high school is in poor condition and needs significant work.**

**A.** In 2010, voters defeated a proposed plan for a new junior senior high school.

**B.** Granby’s 2014 Master Plan details the urgent needs of the junior senior high school building as follows, “The exterior envelope, HVAC,[[10]](#footnote-10) plumbing and electrical and technology infrastructure and systems all need a complete replacement.”

**C.** The district has not resubmitted a plan for a new junior senior high school.

**Impact**: Inadequate buildings and outdated facilities are not conducive to teaching and learning. Without improving the condition of its junior senior high school, the district is challenged to meet the needs of its students and to keep Granby students in the district.

**3. The district does not have complete, accurate, and transparent budget documents. The district and the town do not have a signed, written agreement on municipal expenditures in support of schools.**

* + 1. The district’s budget documents do not include an actual expenditure history.

1. Three different fiscal year 2018 budget documents submitted to the review team did not contain an actual expenditure history.
   1. When asked whether the district had a budget document containing an actual expenditure history, the consultant business manager said that he had been working on one and would provide a copy to the review team. At the end of the onsite review, despite requesting a budget document, the team had not received a budget document with an actual expenditure history.

**B.** A document review indicatedinconsistent budget amounts and inaccurate calculations in the three budget documents.

1. Of the three fiscal year 2018 budget documents provided to the review team, two were labeled POST ATM, meaning after the annual town meeting. The total budget amount for local funding was different in each document and differed from the total approved at town meeting.

2. In both POST ATM budget documents, expenses to be charged to revolving accounts or to be shared with a neighboring town are not included in the “All Funds” total.

**C.** The district’s website does not include budget documents, planning documents, or contact information for the business office.

**D.** The district and the town do not have a signed, written agreement on a method for determining the cost of municipal services that are provided to the district by the town, as required by state regulation 603 CMR 10.04.

1. A town official stated that is the district and the town did not have a written agreement and never had.

**E.** Some town officials described the financial reporting from the district as inadequate and unresponsive to their needs. They spoke of their repeated requests for line item documentation of expenses and detailed multi-year historical information that was not forthcoming from the district. One town official said that as a result, “We are left to make assumptions, without the numbers that we’d like to have.”

**F.** District leaders expressed the belief that they were practicing financial transparency with the reporting that they do.

1. The superintendent and a town official stated that the budget document was shared with town officials, noting that the absence of an actual expenditure history in the budget document had compromised the district’s proposal for increased financial support from the town.

**Impact**: The apparent absence of transparency in the district’s budget documents and the inaccessibility of budget and financial information is confusing and limits cooperative efforts between the district and the town.

**Recommendations**

**Administrators and school committee members should improve communications with town officials and develop a collaborative working relationship. Administrators should continue to explore options to address declining enrollment and its causes.**

1. Administrators and school committee members should increase the frequency of face-to-face meetings with town officials to discuss the financial operations and needs of the district.

1. The superintendent and consultant business manager should meet on a regular basis with the town manager and finance committee members to share information such as budget vs. actual reports, status of special education needs and programs, and plans for improvement of student achievement.

1. Administrators and school committee members should continue their research and analysis of the sustainability of the junior senior high school and explore ways to increase enrollment.

Topics for study could include the costs of structural and systems improvements at the present building, increased program offerings to retain Granby students or attract students from other districts, and sustaining efforts to improve academic student achievement.

To address the concerns of town officials and some residents, the options of regionalization, or tuition payments to other districts for junior/senior students, should continue to be analyzed and cost savings and costs carefully detailed. Meetings with town officials, parents, and residents should be held to publicly share the results of the analysis.

District administrators should explore opportunities for communicating the benefits of attending Granby schools to students in other towns.

1. District administrators should conduct a cost analysis of staff and compare with districts of similar size to determine if cost savings and/or efficiencies can be found. A possible re-allocation of funds might finance technology or other identified academic needs.
2. District leaders could leverage limited resources by exploring pro-bono services that may be offered by area colleges.
   * 1. Granby’s proximity to renowned colleges and universities offers possible opportunities for collaboration.

**Benefits** from implementing this recommendation could include increased financial support from town officials and residents, the improvement of academic programs and services, the retention of Granby students, and the attraction of additional choice students from other districts.

**Recommended resources:**

* *Shifting Resources Strategically to Fund District Priorities* (<https://dmgroupk12.com/solutions/strategic-budgeting>) describes how to reallocate existing funds to support key strategic efforts in three key areas: general education staffing levels, special education services, and federal funds such as Title I, II, and III. It also lists “Ten Mistakes to Avoid” and a list of reflection questions to guide districts’ reallocation.
* ESE’s Turnaround Sustainability Toolkit (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/redesign/sustainability-toolkit.zip>) contains tools, frameworks and resources designed to help district and school leaders effectively plan for sustainability of turnaround efforts. It was originally intended for schools whose School Redesign Grants are ending but could be helpful for any school or district to consider when reallocating funds to support sustainability.
* In *Spending Money Wisely: Getting the Most from School District Budgets* (<https://dmgroupk12.com/> ; scroll down to Research section), authors Nathan Levenson, Karla Baehr, James C. Smith, and Claire Sullivan identify and discuss the top ten opportunities for districts to realign resources and free up funds to support strategic priorities. Drawing on the wisdom of leading thinkers, district leaders, and education researchers from across the country, the authors gathered a long list of opportunities for resource reallocation. To distill these down to the ten most high-impact opportunities, each opportunity was assessed based on its financial benefit, its impact on student achievement, its political feasibility, and its likelihood of success relative to the complexity of implementation.
* *Smarter School Spending for Student Success* (<http://smarterschoolspending.org/>) provides free processes and tools to help districts use their resources to improve student achievement.
* ESE’s *School Finance Statistical Comparisons* web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/statistics/>) provides comparisons of per-pupil expenditure, long-term enrollment, teacher salaries, and special education direct expenditure trends.
* ESE’s *School Building Issues* web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/sbuilding/>) includes funding opportunities, guidelines, and resources related to school buildings.
* *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities* (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003347>), from the National Center for Education Statistics, is intended to help school districts plan for efficient and effective operations. It addresses various topics, including conducting a facilities audit, planning and evaluating maintenance, and managing staff and contractors.
  + 1. **District administrators should create and maintain comprehensive and accurate budget documents and share information on district finances and operations with all constituents.**

1. Budget documents should contain actual expenses for the previous three years.

The inclusion of historical, actual expenses will help administrators identify spending trends and guide planning for the next year’s budget. This information can also assist administrators in reallocating funds to meet improvement goals.

Iterations of budget documents should be dated and clearly titled as “drafts”, “proposed”, “adopted”, “final”, or another agreed-upon identification that makes clear its stage in the budget process.

1. District administrators should ensure accuracy of all financial information contained in all public financial documents.

1. Budget documents should be prepared using financial software.

2. A second staff person in the business office could be asked to review all numbers and formulas in a public document to ensure accuracy.

**C.** In compliance with 603 CMR 10.04, district administrators and town officials should finalize a written agreement that details the calculation process and/or amounts to be used in calculating indirect charges to the district from the town.

**D.** To provide transparency, the district should make business office and financial information available to the public on its website.

Proposed and final budget documents should be included on the website. Also included should be any public bidding documents, financial policies and guidelines, as well as information on costs for meals, transportation, tuition or fee programs, or links to those website pages.

2. Business office staff names, titles, and contact information should be posted on the website to enable constituents to request information or clarification of shared data.

**Benefits** from implementing this recommendation will include a complete and accurate district budget document that can be shared with all constituents. The document, and the process used to create it, will likely improve confidence and trust in the financial management of the district, which can lead to increased financial support.

**Recommended resources:**

* The Rennie Center’s *Smart* *School Budgeting* (<http://www.renniecenter.org/sites/default/files/2017-01/SmartSchoolBudgeting.pdf> ) is a summary of existing resources on school finance, budgeting, and real­location.

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Schedule, Site Visit

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from March 5–7, 2018, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Andrew Bundy, Leadership and Governance
2. Coral Grout, Instruction
3. Frank Sambuceti, Human Resources and Professional Development
4. Margaret Foster, Financial and Asset Management
5. James Hearns, *review team coordinator*

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: part-time contracted business manager, town finance committee member, town administrator, and three town school building committee members.

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: the chair and two members.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers’ association: the president and the vice-president.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: the superintendent, the director of pupil services, and the contracted business manager.

The team visited the following schools: West Street Elementary (pre-K–3), East Meadow Elementary (grades 4–6), and Granby Junior Senior High School (grades 7–12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with students, students’ families, two principals and focus groups with six elementary-school teachers, and with a guidance counselor and one teacher from the junior senior high school.

The team observed 33 classes in the district: 13 at the high-school level, 13 at the junior high school level, and 14 at the 2 elementary schools.

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

* + 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 ESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA).
  + 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.

Site Visit Schedule

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Monday**  03/5/2018 | **Tuesday**  03/6/2018 | **Wednesday**  03/7/2018 |
| Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; teacher focus group; document reviews; interview with teachers’ association; review of personnel files; school committee interviews; and visits to PD sessions. | Interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; teacher focus group; student focus group; parent focus group; town official interview; and visits to West Street Elementary, East Meadow Elementary, and Granby Junior Senior High School for classroom observations. | Focus group with students; interviews with school leaders; visit to Granby Junior Senior High School for classroom observations.  A conference call interview was held on 3/16/18 with the town administrator and a member of the town finance committee. |

Appendix B: Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures

**Table B1a: Granby Public Schools**

**2017–2018 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

| **Group** | **District** | **Percent**  **of Total** | **State** | **Percent of**  **Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| African-American | 1 | 0.1% | 86,305 | 9.0% |
| Asian | 14 | 2.0% | 65,667 | 6.9% |
| Hispanic | 59 | 8.4% | 191,201 | 20.0% |
| Native American | 3 | 0.4% | 2,103 | 0.2% |
| White | 603 | 86.0% | 573,335 | 60.1% |
| Native Hawaiian | -- | -- | 818 | 0.1% |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | 21 | 3.0% | 34,605 | 3.6% |
| All | 701 | 100.0% | 954,034 | 100.0% |
| Note: As of October 1, 2017 | | | | |

**Table B1b: Granby Public Schools**

**2017–2018 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations**

| **Group** | **District** | | | **State** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **N** | **Percent of High Needs** | **Percent of District** | **N** | **Percent of High Needs** | **Percent of State** |
| Students w/ disabilities | 110 | 43.0% | 15.4% | 171,061 | 38.0% | 17.7% |
| Econ. Dis. | 177 | 69.1% | 25.2% | 305,203 | 67.9% | 32.0% |
| ELLs and Former ELLs | 28 | 10.9% | 4.0% | 97,334 | 21.6% | 10.2% |
| All high needs students | 256 | 100.0% | 35.9% | 449,584 | 100.0% | 46.6% |
| Notes: As of October 1, 2017. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 713; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 964,806. | | | | | | |

**Table B2: Granby Public Schools**

**Attendance Rates, 2014–2017**

| **Group** | **N (2017)** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2017)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| High Needs | 247 | 95.2 | 95.2 | 95.0 | 93.9 | -1.3 | 93.1 |
| Econ. Dis. | 160 | -- | 94.9 | 94.5 | 93.3 | -- | 92.6 |
| ELLs | 27 | 97.1 | 96.0 | 92.4 | 94.9 | -2.2 | 93.5 |
| SWD | 124 | 95.7 | 95.6 | 95.6 | 93.9 | -1.8 | 93.0 |
| African American | 4 | 98.3 | 98.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | -98.3 | 94.0 |
| Asian | 19 | 98.0 | 96.9 | 93.2 | 96.0 | -2.0 | 96.3 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 53 | 95.8 | 96.0 | 95.6 | 95.1 | -0.7 | 92.8 |
| Multi-Race | 18 | 90.6 | 94.8 | 95.4 | 94.1 | 3.5 | 94.5 |
| White | 679 | 96.5 | 96.0 | 96.2 | 95.8 | -0.7 | 95.1 |
| All | 776 | 96.4 | 96.0 | 96.1 | 95.7 | -0.7 | 94.6 |
| Notes: The attendance rate is calculated by dividing the total number of days students attended school by the total number of days students were enrolled in a particular school year. A student’s attendance rate is counted toward any district the student attended. In addition, district attendance rates included students who were out placed in public collaborative or private alternative schools/programs at public expense. Attendance rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers. | | | | | | | |

**Table B3: Granby Public Schools**

**Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2015–2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FY15** | | | **FY16** | | | **FY17** | | | |
|  | **Estimated** | | **Actual** | **Estimated** | **Actual** | | **Estimated** | | **Actual** | |
| Expenditures | | | | | | | | | | |
| From local appropriations for schools: |  | | | | | | | | | |
| By school committee | $8,718,039 | $8,410,603 | | $10,614,250 | | $8,838,940 | | $8,681,605 | | $8,679,152 |
| By municipality | $2,185,316 | $2,257,236 | | $2,221,276 | | $2,336,340 | | $2,466,598 | | $2,346,371 |
| Total from local appropriations | $10,903,355 | $10,667,839 | | $12,835,526 | | $11,175,280 | | $11,153,203 | | $11,025,523 |
| From revolving funds and grants | -- | $1,118,900 | | -- | | $2,306,490 | | -- | | $1,795,047 |
| Total expenditures | -- | $11,786,739 | | -- | | $13,481,770 | | -- | | $12,820,570 |
| Chapter 70 aid to education program | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chapter 70 state aid\* | -- | $4,537,515 | | -- | | $4,557,815 | | -- | | $4,600,550 |
| Required local contribution | -- | $4,695,999 | | -- | | $4,781,695 | | -- | | $4,716,269 |
| Required net school spending\*\* | -- | $9,233,514 | | -- | | $9,339,510 | | -- | | $9,316,819 |
| Actual net school spending | -- | $9,518,590 | | -- | | $9,985,877 | | -- | | $10,014,677 |
| Over/under required ($) | -- | $285,076 | | -- | | $646,367 | | -- | | $697,858 |
| Over/under required (%) | -- | 3.1% | | -- | | 6.9% | | -- | | 7.5% |
| \*Chapter 70 state aid funds are deposited in the local general fund and spent as local appropriations.  \*\*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.  Sources: FY15, FY16, and FY17 District End-of-Year Reports, Chapter 70 Program information on ESE website  Data retrieved 12/13/17 and 8/28/18 | | | | | | | | | | |

**Table B4: Granby Public Schools**

**Expenditures Per In-District Pupil**

**Fiscal Years 2014–2016**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expenditure Category** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** |
| Administration | $588 | $647 | $690 |
| Instructional leadership (district and school) | $701 | $739 | $810 |
| Teachers | $4,810 | $4,429 | $5,197 |
| Other teaching services | $979 | $1,136 | $1,231 |
| Professional development | $36 | $50 | $50 |
| Instructional materials, equipment and technology | $234 | $311 | $274 |
| Guidance, counseling and testing services | $661 | $739 | $825 |
| Pupil services | $1,423 | $1,056 | $1,822 |
| Operations and maintenance | $910 | $725 | $854 |
| Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs | $1,370 | $1,465 | $1,552 |
| Total expenditures per in-district pupil | $11,713 | $11,296 | $13,306 |
| Sources: [Per-pupil expenditure reports on ESE website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/statistics/ppx.html)  Note: Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding. | | | |

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Focus Area #1: Learning Objectives & Expectations** |  | Insufficient Evidence | Limited Evidence | Sufficient Evidence | Compelling Evidence | Avg number of points |
|  | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |  |
| 1. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter. | **ES** | 0% | 0% | 93% | 7% | 3.1 |
| **MS** | 0% | 50% | 50% | 0% | 2.5 |
| **HS** | 0% | 8% | 85% | 8% | 3.0 |
| **Total #** | 0 | 4 | 27 | 2 | 2.9 |
| **Total %** | 0% | 12% | 82% | 6% |  |
| 2. The teacher ensures that students understand what they should be learning in the lesson and why. | **ES** | 7% | 21% | 71% | 0% | 2.6 |
| **MS** | 0% | 50% | 50% | 0% | 2.5 |
| **HS** | 8% | 46% | 38% | 8% | 2.5 |
| **Total #** | 2 | 12 | 18 | 1 | 2.5 |
| **Total %** | 6% | 36% | 55% | 3% |  |
| 3. The teacher uses appropriate classroom activities well matched to the learning objective(s). | **ES** | 0% | 0% | 86% | 14% | 3.1 |
| **MS** | 0% | 50% | 50% | 0% | 2.5 |
| **HS** | 0% | 62% | 31% | 8% | 2.5 |
| **Total #** | 0 | 11 | 19 | 3 | 2.8 |
| **Total %** | 0% | 33% | 58% | 9% |  |
| 4. The teacher conducts frequent checks for student understanding, provides feedback, and adjusts instruction. | **ES** | 7% | 14% | 79% | 0% | 2.7 |
| **MS** | 0% | 67% | 33% | 0% | 2.3 |
| **HS** | 15% | 54% | 23% | 8% | 2.2 |
| **Total #** | 3 | 13 | 16 | 1 | 2.5 |
| **Total %** | 9% | 39% | 48% | 3% |  |
| Total Score For Focus Area #1 | **ES** |  |  |  |  | **11.6** |
| **MS** |  |  |  |  | **9.8** |
| **HS** |  |  |  |  | **10.2** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  | **10.7** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Focus Area #2: Student Engagement & Higher-Order Thinking** |  | Insufficient Evidence | Limited Evidence | Sufficient Evidence | Compelling Evidence | Avg number of points |
|  | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |  |
| 5. Students assume responsibility to learn and are engaged in the lesson. | **ES** | 0% | 14% | 71% | 14% | 3.0 |
| **MS** | 0% | 50% | 50% | 0% | 2.5 |
| **HS** | 0% | 62% | 38% | 0% | 2.4 |
| **Total #** | 0 | 13 | 18 | 2 | 2.7 |
| **Total %** | 0% | 39% | 55% | 6% |  |
| 6. Students engage in higher-order thinking. | **ES** | 29% | 36% | 36% | 0% | 2.1 |
| **MS** | 0% | 50% | 50% | 0% | 2.5 |
| **HS** | 31% | 62% | 8% | 0% | 1.8 |
| **Total #** | 8 | 16 | 9 | 0 | 2.0 |
| **Total %** | 24% | 48% | 27% | 0% |  |
| 7. Students communicate their ideas and thinking with each other. | **ES** | 14% | 36% | 50% | 0% | 2.4 |
| **MS** | 17% | 50% | 33% | 0% | 2.2 |
| **HS** | 15% | 69% | 15% | 0% | 2.0 |
| **Total #** | 5 | 17 | 11 | 0 | 2.2 |
| **Total %** | 15% | 52% | 33% | 0% |  |
| 8. Students engage with meaningful, real-world tasks. | **ES** | 14% | 21% | 50% | 14% | 2.6 |
| **MS** | 0% | 50% | 50% | 0% | 2.5 |
| **HS** | 15% | 46% | 31% | 8% | 2.3 |
| **Total #** | 4 | 12 | 14 | 3 | 2.5 |
| **Total %** | 12% | 36% | 42% | 9% |  |
| Total Score For Focus Area #2 | **ES** |  |  |  |  | **10.1** |
| **MS** |  |  |  |  | **9.7** |
| **HS** |  |  |  |  | **8.5** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  | **9.4** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Focus Area #3: Inclusive Practice & Classroom Culture** |  | Insufficient Evidence | Limited Evidence | Sufficient Evidence | Compelling Evidence | Avg number of points |
|  | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |  |
| 9. The teacher ensures that students are engaging in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs. | **ES** | 14% | 29% | 50% | 7% | 2.5 |
| **MS** | 0% | 60% | 40% | 0% | 2.4 |
| **HS** | 0% | 62% | 38% | 0% | 2.4 |
| **Total #** | 2 | 15 | 14 | 1 | 2.4 |
| **Total %** | 6% | 47% | 44% | 3% |  |
| 10. The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies. | **ES** | 0% | 36% | 57% | 7% | 2.7 |
| **MS** | 17% | 33% | 50% | 0% | 2.3 |
| **HS** | 31% | 62% | 8% | 0% | 1.8 |
| **Total #** | 5 | 15 | 12 | 1 | 2.3 |
| **Total %** | 15% | 45% | 36% | 3% |  |
| 11. Classroom routines and positive supports are in place to ensure that students behave appropriately. | **ES** | 0% | 7% | 64% | 29% | 3.2 |
| **MS** | 0% | 33% | 33% | 33% | 3.0 |
| **HS** | 15% | 69% | 15% | 0% | 2.0 |
| **Total #** | 2 | 12 | 13 | 6 | 2.7 |
| **Total %** | 6% | 36% | 39% | 18% |  |
| 12. The classroom climate is conducive to teaching and learning. | **ES** | 0% | 0% | 71% | 29% | 3.3 |
| **MS** | 0% | 33% | 33% | 33% | 3.0 |
| **HS** | 15% | 46% | 31% | 8% | 2.3 |
| **Total #** | 2 | 8 | 16 | 7 | 2.8 |
| **Total %** | 6% | 24% | 48% | 21% |  |
| Total Score For Focus Area #3 | **ES** |  |  |  |  | **11.7** |
| **MS** |  |  |  |  | **10.7** |
| **HS** |  |  |  |  | **8.5** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  | **10.3** |

1. According to ESE data, between 2013 and 2017, enrollment in the district declined 25 percent. In the same period, the ranks of teacher FTEs decreased by 23.1 FTEs (29 percent) and teacher FTEs per 100 students declined by 5 percent. Between 2013 and 2017, paraprofessional FTEs per 100 students increased by 27 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For comparison with other small Massachusetts districts, see “Fiscal Conditions in Rural School Districts,” Massachusetts Department of Elementary Education, January 2018, pp. 1, 3, and 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Granby’s 2014 Master Plan details the urgent needs of the junior senior high school building as follows, “The exterior envelope, HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning), plumbing, and electrical and technology infrastructure and systems all need a complete replacement.” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Other factors are also taken into consideration when determining the type of review a district will receive. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. SMART goals are Specific and Strategic; Measurable; Action Oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results Focused; and Timed and Tracked. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. SMART goals are Specific and Strategic; Measurable; Action Oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results Focused; and Timed and Tracked. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. An informative evaluation is factual and cites instructional details such as methodology, pedagogy, Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice or instruction of subject-based knowledge that is aligned with the state curriculum frameworks. It does not commit to improvement strategies. An instructive evaluation includes comments intended to improve instruction. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. On Tuesday, February 28, 2017, after collecting public comment since November 2016, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted 9-1 to amend the educator evaluation regulations. The most significant change in the regulations is the elimination of a separate student impact rating. Under the [amended regulations](http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/FY2017/2017-02/item6.html), evaluators do not have to make a separate judgment about an educator’s impact on student learning. Instead, student learning is embedded as an indicator within one of the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework’s four standards. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Assessments in the district are limited to MCAS, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basis Early Literacy Skills), and ELA and math benchmark assessments at the elementary schools, and some common assessments in addition to MCAS, PSAT, SAT, and AP at the junior senior high school. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. HVAC stands for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)