

# Annual Evaluation of the Superintendent By the Lexington School Committee

*For the period from March 2, 2011 to May 8, 2012*

**Superintendent: Dr. Paul Ash**

## **School Committee Members**

Mary Ann Stewart, Chair

Alessandro Alessandrini, Vice-Chair

Margaret Coppe

Jessie Steigerwald

Bonnie Brodner

## **Signature**

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**Date of completion:**

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*This document is an evaluation rubric for the 18-month goals set for January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2011 approved by the School Committee on November 2, 2010.*

*If a goal directly ties to annual job performance, the evaluation section where it can be found is listed in parentheses.*

## **A. Meeting of Annual Goals**

1. Ensures that academic, social and emotional needs of students are identified and matched with appropriate and effective curriculum and instructional experiences.
  - a. Curriculum review

In 2006, the Lexington Public Schools restarted the curriculum review process after a ten-year hiatus. Since this evaluation covers more than one school year, this self-assessment will include information since March 1, 2011. Last June, the District completed the first year of the social studies curriculum review and the second year of the ELA curriculum review. All goals were met. On May 8, Carol Pilarski will present the report from the ELA curriculum review committee, and on May 22, she will present the report of the social studies curriculum review committee. We anticipate that all goals for these committees will be met. In addition, the District restarted the mathematics review due to the new common core curriculum.
  - b. Assessment of programs

See section C (Educational Leadership)
  - c. MCAS review

See section. C (Educational Leadership)
  - d. K-5 literacy initiative

In 2006, the Superintendent restarted the K-12 curriculum review process, which had been on hold for ten years. Each year since 2006, the Superintendent requested funds to continue the curriculum review process for two or three departments in order to ensure high learning standards for all students. Under the direction of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development, we are completing Year 3 of the ELA curriculum review. It should be noted that many changes in the ELA standards have occurred as a result of the state's recent adoption of the Common Core Standards within the 2011 Massachusetts State Framework. At the K-5 level, the literacy work has been incorporated into and aligned with the development of the standards-based report card and the identification of the professional development/training that will be required to ensure clear understanding of the standards. The new standards call for changes in curriculum, teachings, assessment, and learning. It is important that teachers are given time and support to learn new practices in multiple settings, and that they engage in the many options available to learn about implementation of the workshop model of teaching and learning in order to understand the report card and how student progress towards the standards are measured. These plans are

designed to provide opportunities for teachers to engage actively with the revised curriculum. Significant professional development has already been put in place: comprehensive literacy instruction in reading, writing, and/or word study, collaborative assessment, balanced literacy, guided reading, phonics instruction, and more. A thorough report on this topic is scheduled to be delivered to the School Committee on May 22.

e. Process to identify student social and emotional needs

Several efforts this year have been put in place to better identify students' social and emotional needs. The following, while not an exhaustive list, are some examples of programs and services available in the district that have had a positive impact in increasing pro-social skills in our students.

In general education, a system-wide behavior committee, formed three years ago, determined that a better process for identifying students with emotional/behavioral challenges was needed. In particular, identifying students with internalizing behaviors was deemed a priority for most schools. The behavior committee, made up of counselors, the behavior specialist, psychologists, principals, and special education staff and administrators, researched various screening and observations tools. The Behavior and Emotional Screening System (BESS) and eCove (observation tool) were chosen. The Bridge Elementary School has been piloting these with grade three students during the 10-11 and 11-12 school years. Results have shown that the screening tool helped to identify students struggling with anxiety, stress, and emotional difficulty that would not have been identified easily or if at all in some cases. Once identified, a Behavior Assistance Team (at Bridge) met to develop strategies to intervene with these struggling students. Results have shown that this system has been effective in identification and intervention with students with social/emotional needs.

Other elementary and middle schools have used the BESS and eCove as well as other processes to identify students with social, emotional and behavioral needs. Some use their Child Study process to identify and implement intervention strategies. The district-wide behavior specialist has also been used to conduct Functional Behavior Assessments, develop behavior plans, and provide consultation to teachers in response to the needs of those students.

The preschool has adopted Tools of the Mind. Many children start school not ready to learn because they lack the ability to regulate their social, emotional, and cognitive behaviors. Tools of the Mind is a research-based early childhood program that provides a strong foundation for school success in preschool children by teaching them self-regulation skills. The preschool staff members have extensive training in Tools of the Mind and are in their second year of implementation. Preschool students have demonstrated increased success as a result of this program.

Schools have continued their use of Open Circle and have expanded the use of The Responsive Classroom. These programs have been effective in helping students understand and express their feelings appropriately, improve their social skills, and decrease problem behavior. These programs have led to more high-quality and effective instruction and increased student achievement.

The middle schools brought in Rachel's Challenge, an assembly designed to urge students to accept Rachel Scott's (first student killed at Columbine) five challenges: *to treat others the way you would like to be treated, dream big and believe in yourself, appreciate everyone and mock no one, practice the power of positive gossip and forgive and be forgiven.* Rachel's challenge has created community service opportunities, endorsed acts of kindness, and created a human chain of all students and staff to show how we are all connected.

In addition, both middle schools have implemented a variety of programs and strategies to increase pro-social behavior and resiliency and reduce stress. Anti-bullying programs and instructional sessions on cyber-safety, navigating the social world of middle school, drug and alcohol addiction, and how to make healthy choices are examples of these programs.

As part of Lexington High School's School Improvement Plan, various programs and strategies have been implemented. They include: strengthened homeroom and advisory structure, introduction in reflective exercises on healthy choices, community service, citizenship, and integrity to self and tolerance.

The Alpha program was developed to assist students returning from an emotional crisis or hospitalization. A clinical social worker and academic tutor provide support to students as they transition back to school. Prior to this program being available, students' transition back to school was very difficult and often led to re-hospitalization, academic failure, referral to special education and admittance to the Multidisciplinary Support Team program (a special education program for students with emotional disabilities) or an out of district placement. The program has been very effective in supporting students in crisis transition successfully back to school. With the support of the Alpha program teachers, more students have met with success in returning to school and classes.

The Wellness Department at the high school has offered Yoga and Pilates and stress reduction and management programs.

While stress continues to remain a challenge for students at the high school, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey results indicate that programs and services at the high school seem to be having a positive impact on stress levels for students.

Students experiencing social/emotional challenges and/or high levels of stress or anxiety find their way to the nurse's office. The nurses have participated in professional development on calming and coping strategies for students and staff and have received professional development and consultation from the district's consulting psychiatrist, Dr. Jeff Bostic.

The Guidance Department worked on various projects, K-12, in increasing resiliency. A consultant was brought in to provide professional development and to assist the department in creating a plan to begin development of a K-12 guidance curriculum. The hiring of a K-12 Director of Guidance and .5 Assistant Director of Guidance will be instrumental in the achievement of this goal. All guidance counselors have worked in their schools to help implement the pro-social behavior goals outlined in each school's School Improvement Plan.

The Student Services Department offered case consultation, professional development, and student specific case consultation and support to the mental health providers in the district, nurses, and special education teams through its consulting psychiatrist, Dr. Jeff Bostic. Dr. Bostic was available to the district one day per week. In addition, Dr. Bostic provided consultation to special education programs for students with emotional disabilities. Mr. Joel Ristuccia, consulting psychologist, also provided consultation in program development and improvement throughout the district.

In special education, the process for identifying students with emotional disabilities was through its special education evaluation process. Students found eligible for special education due to an emotional disability received support through a continuum of services. This continuum consisted of consultation, counseling, and specialized programs from preschool through grade 12 or up to age 22.

In addition to supporting students identified with emotional disabilities, students with deficits in the area of social pragmatics also received support and services through direct services from speech and language pathologists for social pragmatics, social skills/social pragmatics programs within the autism spectrum programs and summer social skills program. These programs and services helped students participate in the life of their schools with their peers.

2. Ensures that the faculty and staff are of high quality, and are enabled and supported to perform at the highest professional level.

a. Support professional development –

The Superintendent and the district are highly committed to a systematized professional development program that strongly links the effective training of teachers to improved performance for students. Given the two-year history of our developing program, increasing numbers of teachers have been enrolled in after-school courses, and have also been the recipients of many embedded programs offered by our program leaders and consultants during the course of the school day. More in-depth professional development will be offered to teachers within the course of the school day so as to ensure that district expectations regarding curriculum, instruction, and assessment are addressed for all members of the faculty at the appropriate grade levels. Along these lines, the district will pay very close attention to the differentiation required within such a

professional development program that honors individual teacher needs, school-based needs, new teacher requirements, and those of veteran teachers. In this regard, our district-wide Professional Development Committee organized a number of in-depth, graduate-level courses taught by veteran LPS staff members to their colleagues (e.g., "Algebraic Reasoning in the Elementary Grades" and "Statistics for Integrated Math Instruction at the Secondary Level").

With a robust, comprehensive induction and mentoring program already in place for our newest teachers, we are currently developing professional development strands that will create more opportunities in teacher leadership for our veteran educators - those who are interested in helping to share best practices and research with colleagues through workshops and courses, along with those who may be seeking administrative roles within the school district in the future. As we continue to expand both the depth and breadth of our professional development for all staff (e.g., the successful launching this spring of a new, in-house graduate-level course entitled "Effective Teaching Strategies for Paraprofessionals"), we are building upon a solid foundation of PD that takes many forms within the district. From our after school, in-house graduate courses to the job-embedded work with consultants who are experts in their respective fields of research to building-based PD that supports the goals of specific school communities to year-round curriculum development - we are a district that values and supports lifelong learning. We will continue to seek opportunities for growth and challenge that professional development can provide for our faculty and staff, knowing all the while that strong professional learning experiences lead to enriched and enhanced learning opportunities for all students in the Lexington Public Schools.

b. Implement a more effective hiring process

The Superintendent placed high importance on hiring extremely qualified employees. Rather than delegate this function to others who would recommend finalist candidates, the Superintendent personally led the Clarke Principal search committee and the Director of Special Education search committee, which included parents, teachers, and administrators. His personal involvement allowed all participants to share their views with the Superintendent and help him make the wisest hires for Lexington. In addition, the district continues to work hard to increase minority hiring. While we have not achieved the success we need, we have increased the number of LPS staff attending minority job fairs, interviewed more minority candidates, and recently made a job offer (we think the candidate will accept a job at a charter school).

We also engage in targeted teacher and administrator recruiting. Full-day, on-campus interviews were conducted at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. This process yielded high-quality candidates who were hired to fill teaching positions in the 2011-2012 academic year. In addition, we directly recruited candidates for difficult to fill administrative openings via direct mailing (both electronically and in print). For example, we

created a brochure for the Director of Special Education position and sent it to all current Directors of Special Education in Massachusetts.

We continued to improve our employee orientation process. All newly hired teachers were assigned to a track within the mentor-coach and new teacher induction programs. All new employees also receive Civil Rights and Child Safety training during their intake interviews, and were required to complete an on-line review of selected School Committee policies as part of the hiring process.

3. Obtain and manage financial resources.

a. Work with PBC on the Bowman, Bridge, and Estabrook projects

During this past year, the school administration worked closely with the school personnel, architects, Town boards, and Town officials on all aspects of the Bridge, Bowman, and Estabrook building projects. The collective efforts of many individuals led to the successful support by Lexington voters, Town Meeting, and the Massachusetts School Building Authority (Estabrook only). The Superintendent of Schools and his administration spent hundreds of hours with stakeholders, members of the Department of Public Facilities (DPF), the Permanent Building Committee (PBC), the School Committee, and the architects to develop detailed plans for each building project.

b. Develop a 5-year capital plan

In October, the School Committee received the District's five-year capital plan, which was also shared with the Capital Expenditures Committee and the Town Manager. The plan identified the on-going capital needs for all schools, excluding the large building projects that were included in the ten-year capital plan. Since 2008, the school department has produced five- and ten-year capital plans as part of a process to identify needs and sources of funding. The capital planning process has made a significant difference in gaining public support to maintain the school department's capital infrastructure.

c. Improve facilities maintenance

For the fourth consecutive year, completed work orders increased for the Public Facilities Department. This is an indicator of improved reliability of equipment and increased productivity of maintenance operations. The operating budget for FY 2013 will build on this trend by increased budgeting of supplies and materials to support more work being completed by DPF staff. We also anticipate language in both AFSCME and SEIU contracts for next year that will allow SEIU trades to work in all Lexington buildings managed by DPF, which will further improve operational efficiencies and move more work from



contracted prevailing wage rates to negotiated rates with DPF staff.

Progress was also maintained on implementing the ten-year Facility Master Plan. Construction projects for Bridge, Bowman, and Estabrook Elementary Schools are in process. The implementation of these projects, and planned work for Hastings before the end of the decade, will eliminate deferred maintenance in the schools and focus will then be directed at achieving capital funding for facility renewal so that all buildings can be maintained in condition suitable for their use.

Recent scoring by MSBA of our Facility Maintenance program validates the success over the last five years of the DPF. The school maintenance program received 1.8 points out of 2.0 possible points. The only deductions were for facility commissioning, which DPF accomplishes with internal resources, and capital reserve funding, which is a current policy discussion.

d. Develop a cost-effective administrative structure

During the two years, we reorganized the middle school department chair structure and eliminated ten department chairs (five at each school) and replaced them with five department heads who are responsible for both schools. The English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Foreign Language, and Science Department Heads now supervise and evaluate teachers within their respective departments. The former department chairs were not responsible for supervision and evaluation. The new model will allow us to more effectively align the curriculum standards and expectations in both schools, and supervise and evaluate teachers by administrators who are experts in their subject areas. In addition, the five new evaluators will be essential when we start implementing the new DESE teacher evaluation system in 2013.

Last year, the Superintendent recommended we reorganize the administrative structure for guidance. The plan was to eliminate the high school director position and replace it with a K-12 director. The K-12 director would then be able to supervise and evaluate all guidance counselors and align departmental goals. Since no candidate met Lexington's expectations, the reorganization was held off for one more year. In addition, we recognized that the scope of the K-12 position is too broad for one person. The FY 13 budget includes funds for a 0.5 assistant director position. Both positions have been filled with highly competent and experienced people for next year.

A few years ago, we created a finance officer position within the special education department. This individual, working with others, substantially increased the FY 11 special education circuit breaker reimbursement. The Lexington Public Schools received approximately \$400,000 for in-district students whose special education costs exceeded the state's circuit breaker threshold. Claims for in-district students have increased over previous years. The model we started two years ago will be replicated by the Brookline, Newton, and Needham Public Schools next year.

e. Negotiate contractual settlements that are fair and appropriate within the financial means of the Town

Due to a recent, major change in the collective bargaining law regarding health insurance, the school department worked closely with the Town Manager to negotiate changes in the Town's health insurance plans. In the fall, the coalition bargaining team and the Board of Selectmen agreed that the Town will join the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) in FY 13. The LPS Human Resources Department was part of the team that negotiated with all unions the costs that will be paid by employees and the benefits they will receive. In addition, the LPS Human Resources department completed negotiations with the Technology Unit in December 2011. During the spring of 2012, the school department has started or will start negotiations with all unions.

**B. Relationship with the School Committee**

*The School Committee relies on the Superintendent in order to make informed decisions that will affect the quality of education for Lexington's children receiving public school education.*

*In order to promote a climate of mutual respect and trust, a professional working relationship should be maintained. It is expected that the Superintendent will support and implement School Committee policies and directives, and effectively communicate these to the students, staff, and members of the community.*

**B. Relationship with the School Committee**

1. Interprets, supports, and executes the intent of all School Committee policies.

The administration worked with the School Committee's policy committee to adopt new policies where needed (e.g., head injury management, animal in schools, security cameras) and revised other policies. Each year, the administration provides all employees with training sessions on key policies they need to know. In addition, all principals are provided with policy handbooks that are kept up-to-date.

2. Keeps the School Committee informed on issues, needs, and operation of the School District.

The Superintendent regularly informed the School Committee on issues and needs of the School District in a variety of ways: at School Committee meetings, regular briefings through email (almost daily), regular meetings with the School Committee chair, meetings or phone calls with members of the School Committee as matters arose, forwarding important documents to the School Committee between meetings when important matters arose (EPA, MSBA, legal, etc.).

3. Gives a recommendation to the School Committee on items requiring School Committee action, based on thorough research and analysis.

The Superintendent included in all School Committee packets his reasons for all recommendations requiring School Committee action. On major action items, the School Committee and Superintendent scheduled more than one meeting to ensure that all constituencies had an opportunity to express their views before a vote was taken.

4. In collaboration with the chair, helps establish clear direction for School Committee meetings, and provides to School Committee agendas and support materials in a timely fashion to allow for informed policy formation and decision-making.

The Superintendent and School Committee chair worked very closely this past year planning all School Committee meetings. The agendas were designed to address the major needs of the school system, including budget, collective bargaining, and policy matters. The Superintendent believes the School Committee packets included the support materials committee members needed to properly fulfill their role, and topics were scheduled to meet legal and practical needs.

5. Maintains a professional working relationship with the School Committee.

The Superintendent values a strong working relationship with the entire School Committee and all of the members, as individuals. He believes he has had a positive and constructive working relationship with all committee members. When the Superintendent received a telephone call or email on any topic, he quickly got back to the committee member. When committee members have asked for information, the Superintendent worked with his team to prepare a thoughtful response.

6. Seeks and accepts constructive criticism from members of the School Committee.

The Superintendent is committed to continuous improvement and has welcomed constructive feedback from the School Committee.

7. Remains impartial toward the School Committee; treats all Committee members alike.

The Superintendent recognizes that he works for the entire School Committee and he believes he treats all School Committee members with respect.

### **C. Educational Leadership**

*Educational decisions must address the needs of all students.*

*The Superintendent should keep abreast of the latest research and developments in the field of education. Curriculum evaluation and development, professional evaluation and development, and student assessment should all be considered in the formulation of short and long-range goals and objectives.*

### **C. Educational Leadership**

1. Provides direction to principals in leading the learning in their schools and holds them accountable for improving teaching, learning, and achievement.

Annually, the Superintendent evaluates all principals, in writing, based on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) principles of effective leadership. The annual evaluation documents include specific goals regarding the principal's leadership and the quality of teaching and learning in their school. In addition, the Superintendent held a mid-year conference and other meetings with principals. The purpose of the supervision/evaluation meetings with principals was to assess their progress on annual goals, and other important matters including, but not limited to, personnel issues, the physical plant, school climate, educational plans for the future, professional development, and student safety.

2. Ensures current principles and best practices are implemented, based on data collection and on research to foster effective classroom instruction and educational decisions.

The Lexington Public Schools is committed to continuously improving the quality of teaching and learning in every classroom. In order to assess the effectiveness of current practices, principals and other supervisors examine individual and group effectiveness by using a variety of means: MCAS tests, AP examinations, SAT subject area tests, DRA literacy tests at the elementary level, teacher evaluations, K-12 curriculum reviews, and feedback from educators, students, and parents. Data were used to update the curriculum to the highest state and national standards. Teaching practices were improved both formally (e.g., supervision/evaluation, professional development courses) and informally (PLCs and non-scheduled meetings when teachers share best practices). Based on the information gathered, the Superintendent worked with principals to ensure that high quality practices were implemented in the classrooms and by other educators. In addition, the Director of Educational Technology and Assessment and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction both provided the Superintendent with data regarding current practices.

3. Holds principals, teachers, and staff accountable for having high and appropriate standards for every student and for helping students to meet them.

The Lexington Public Schools set very high and appropriate standards for every student. This past year, the District had the highest average SAT scores in the state for the fifth year in a row. The District's MCAS scores were among the highest in the state at every grade level. On the grade 10 ELA MCAS test, all students scored at the proficient or advanced levels, which meant there was no achievement gap on this test for African American, Special Education, Low Income, or English Language Learner students. On the grade 10 mathematics MCAS test, nearly all students scored at the proficient or advanced levels. In addition, the District had the highest percentage of special education students who scored in the advanced level in the Boston area.

4. Works with principals, teachers and staff to supervise and evaluate their performance, using well-defined performance standards, and identifies with them areas for growth.

The Superintendent evaluated all of the principals and central office administrators this past year. In addition, the HR office regularly reviews records of all employees to ensure that faculty and staff members are evaluated in accordance with the provisions of their collective bargaining agreement.

5. Aligns instruction and assessment with state and federal frameworks and with community standards that reflect high standards for learning standards for learning.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction, under the supervision of Assistant Superintendent Carol Pilarski, has been conducting regular curriculum reviews to ensure that the LPS curriculum is aligned with state and federal standards. This past year, the department conducted the Year 1 curriculum review of the social studies and Year 3 of the ELA review. As there remain some final recommendations and training that need to be put in place for successful implementation of these revisions, the ELA review committee has requested an additional half-year to complete the necessary work. Previously, the District reviewed the curriculum in the mathematics, physical education, and science departments.

This past year, the K-5 Standards-Based report card committee focused all of its work on the implementation of the Common Core standards in all subject domains. The committee's work will provide teachers, parents, and students alike with very specific and targeted learning goals that will more effectively communicate student progress. In keeping with the district's goals, the standards-based report card is also designed to include performance indicators for pro-social skills and student learning approaches. Much training has been scheduled for all K-5 teachers as the district approaches implementation of the newly developed report card in the FY13 academic year. Parent education forums explaining the change will also be conducted in the summer and fall of 2012.

6. Works to improve MCAS and other standardized test scores for each school and each student sub-group within the district.  
The MCAS scores for the Lexington Public Schools were among the highest in the state this past year. In order to improve the scores for students in subgroups, the District launched or expanded numerous initiatives: Mega math (at Diamond), Intervention blocks at all K-5 schools, METCO before or after school support programs (LHS, Diamond, Clarke, and the MELP program in grades 2 through 5), use of frequent formative assessments in all schools tied to changing future instruction, and the use of PLCs to identify struggling students and develop intervention strategies.
7. Challenges the educational community to raise expectation of students' capacity for learning.  
The District's professional development program has been recognized as a national model for improving professional practice and student learning. During the past three years, teachers have voluntarily enrolled in more than 1000 courses to improve their knowledge of curriculum, instruction, or the use of educational technology. Last spring, 100 Lexington educators enrolled in a two-day course on how to use student performance data and the data cycle to identify student needs to improve future instruction. Throughout the year, principals and other supervisors used multiple means to support all educators as they examined their practices and looked for ways to improve practice: PLCs, department meetings, principal meetings, book groups, supervision/evaluation meetings, informal feedback, curriculum reviews, intervention programs, etc.
8. In collaboration with the School Committee, develops the mission and vision statements for the district.  
The Lexington Public School system is committed to high academic achievement for all students, caring and respectful relationships, and a culture of continuous improvement for all educators and students. These goals were reestablished in September when they were presented to the School Committee.

#### **D. General Management**

*The Superintendent has the responsibility for the efficient and effective operation of the school system. With the School Committee, the Superintendent develops goals and objectives that provide the framework and directions for successful leadership and management. It is important that the Superintendent is familiar with the state and federal laws, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations, School Committee policy, and community values and expectations.*

#### **D. General Management**

1. Exercises effective organizational skills based on research and best practices.

The Lexington Public Schools is a well-run organization. On an on-going basis, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) evaluates the District's compliance with state and federal regulations. This past year, DESE found the District was in full compliance with special education regulations, civil rights laws, and federal Title grants (based on the three-year coordinated review). The finance and human resources departments were well organized with proper internal controls. While special education students perform at very high levels, as compared with nearby school districts, some faculty members have expressed concerns that the special education department needs to improve its decision-making processes and timeliness for ordering materials. Next year, improving the organizational efficiency of the special education department will be a goal.

2. Models ethical behavior, interacts with others in a professional manner, and accepts responsibility for his/her own action.

The Superintendent always tried to model ethical behavior, interact with others in a professional manner, and accept responsibility for his own behavior. After receiving the Wellman report, the Superintendent announced that he needed to increase his visibility in schools. Starting in late March, the Superintendent began visiting schools one full day per week.

3. Works to develop and maintain a trusting relationship with employees, School Committee, and the community.

Building trust between and among employees is one of the most important attributes of all effective schools. Based on the Wellman report, building trust within the school system needs to be a goal for the Superintendent next year. In order to increase the level of trust and understanding between the Superintendent and staff members, the Superintendent will continue to set aside one full day per week to visit schools through this June. Next year, he will make it a priority to continue school visits on a regular schedule to be determined. In addition, the Superintendent worked with principals, union presidents, and the Steering Committee on Improving Professional Relationships to identify ways he, and the members of the administrative team, can build trust throughout the school system.



4. Ensures a safe environment for all students and employees, including emergency procedures.

In the past year, the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) was completed. This grant enabled the district to provide training for key staff members in emergency preparedness and communication. Working with the consultant, LPS revised and updated district and building crisis plans and integrated them with town and state emergency plans. These plans are now maintained on a secure website available to appropriate personnel. New all-hazards-approach Classroom Emergency Procedures flipbooks have been installed in all classrooms and additional spaces as required. Emergency Operations Plans have also been distributed to key staff depending on their Incident Command System (ICS) role.

During the implementation of the grant, the district found that the original plan of communicating with parents and students in large group settings was not the most effective or efficient method. In order to ensure that emergency information is available to all parents, the District website is in the process of being revised. We will continue to use school newsletters and the Global Connect system when it is appropriate to do so.

The implementation of the grant has resulted in improved safety awareness throughout the district, updated plans that are available to teachers and substitutes, and a sustainable training plan that can be refreshed annually with district staff.

**E. Budget Management**

*The School Committee has the responsibility of studying and approving the budget, and the Superintendent has the responsibility to present that budget to the School Committee in a manner that promotes their full understanding.*

*The budget should take into consideration the needs of the entire system based on a formal assessment process.*

*The need to promote the school system and gather community support for school finances is an integral part of the budget process.*

**E. Budget Management**

1. Develops a budgeting system that is clear and concise, using a model determined in collaboration with the Finance Office. The process for producing and monitoring school budgets has been refined over the past seven years. In September the School Committee received the budget guidelines, which were then sent to all program leaders. Program leaders received historical financial information and projected enrollment figures (where applicable). Budget requests were then reviewed by senior staff and discussions were held with administrators to clarify requests and explore alternatives. During the first week in January, the School Committee received a budget book that included a detailed description of all program budgets and funding sources. The Finance Department oversaw the implementation of this process.

In addition, the budget monitoring process followed by LPS required that all requisitions were approved by the Finance Office before a purchase order could be generated. The purpose of the purchase order system was to ensure there are adequate funds within the program leader's account and that purchasing laws were complied with. Program leaders were able to monitor their budgets online.

2. Involves staff in budget preparation and setting priorities.

Please see the answer to question 1 above.

3. Works collaboratively with Town Manager and the appropriate Boards, Commissions, and Committees to ensure the financial needs of the schools are clearly understood and aligned with other town needs.

The Superintendent and members of the central administrative team have a strong working relationship with the Town Manager and other Town Boards and Committees on all financial matters. The Superintendent's office regularly corresponded with the Chairmen of all Town financial boards, in order to apprise them of the state of the school budget and any significant changes.

During the budget review process, the Superintendent's office answered all questions from Town appointed and elected officials in a prompt and courteous manner.

4. Works with the School Committee to make budget documents available to the School Committee and the public in a timely fashion.  
The School Committee, Town elected and appointed officials, and members of the public received budget documents in a timely fashion. All important financial documents were promptly posted on the LPS web site.
5. Explains and advocates for the school budget to the School Committee, Town Meeting, and the public.  
The Superintendent made it a priority to explain and advocate for the school budget at School Committee meetings, TMMA meetings, Town meetings, and at other meetings (PTA, League of Women Voters, Site Council meetings, and with the press). The transparency of the school budget helped build credibility and support within the Lexington community.
6. Manages the school budget and ensures adequate internal controls and accounting practices.  
The Finance Department has adequate internal controls and accounting practices. The financial reports are periodically reviewed by State officials, auditors, and town personnel. The Superintendent and Finance Department have a very close working relationship with the Town's Assistant Town Manager for Finance.
7. Implements and follows meaningful financial reporting system, e.g., provides clear and concise budget status summaries to the School Committee on a quarterly basis.  
The School Committee received quarterly reports that included balances and projected surpluses/deficits for each major account. The quarterly reports also included explanations for all significant variances in budget line items and transfer requests, when necessary.

**F. Personnel Management**

*The Superintendent is responsible, either directly or indirectly, for the hiring of all school personnel.*

*Personnel decisions should be approached in a non-discriminatory and impartial manner.*

*The Superintendent should foster an environment conducive to good teaching and should be alert to issues that affect staff morale.*

*The Superintendent should develop and lead a meaningful staff evaluation program, and should provide professional development opportunities that meet the needs of staff.*

*The School Committee should be kept informed in appropriate matters of collective bargaining, performance standards, professional development, and grievances.*

**F. Personnel Management**

1. Models and promotes an inclusive atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school system.

The Superintendent values a school culture that demonstrates respect for all employees, students, and parents. He also values a culture that welcomes participation in school matters, where appropriate.

2. Develops and encourages practices that continue to increase the diversity of the staff and supports that diversity.

The Lexington Public Schools focused on this goal in three ways: Recruiting teachers of color, promoting current students of color to become teachers one day, and increasing our educational efforts in the classroom to support diversity. In our ongoing effort to increase the diversity of our workforce, we continued to actively recruit teachers of color by attending two diversity job fairs annually: the National Employment Minority Network job fair held in Boston; and, for the past two years, participated in the Greater Boston School Human Resources Network diversity job fair held in Needham. In order to encourage students of color to become future teachers, LPS joined *Today's Students Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT)*. The four school districts (Lexington, Andover, Arlington, and Brookline) now provide eligible students training and academic and financial support to become future teachers. Upon their completion of an undergraduate education program, the TSTT students will then have the opportunity to return to the Lexington Public Schools as teachers. We also continued our long-standing commitment to diversity in all schools by our actions and curriculum. In partnership with Lexington's Diversity Task Force, we recognized and honored two staff members at Town Meeting by presenting them with the Sharyn Wong-Chan and Sara Harrington Diversity Award for their efforts in promoting diversity within our schools and throughout the broader Lexington community.

3. Is responsible for a professional development plan based upon the needs of the District and aligned with the goal of improving curriculum and instruction.

In addition to what is described in section A2(a), beginning this past year, under the oversight of the system-wide Mentor/Coach Committee, the Human Resources Office conducted a comprehensive three-year teacher induction and mentoring program for all new hires. The program required all new teachers to participate in a three-day new teacher orientation program prior to the start of the academic year, complete a three-credit teacher induction course entitled “Better Beginnings for Lexington Teachers” in year one of their employment (taught by veteran Lexington staff members), complete a three-credit graduate-level course in effective teaching entitled *The Skillful Teacher* in year two, and, in year three, complete an elective course offered through Lexington’s Professional Development Catalog. New teachers were also assigned a one-to-one mentor during their first year of teaching and a one-to-one content coach in year two. All mentors and coaches received required training annually, and a new cohort of mentors and coaches were trained biennially through the district’s Mentor Training Institute.

For veteran teachers, the district established higher standards for courses that will be approved for salary lane credit. The district worked with the LEA to revise course approval standards in the 1970s to ensure courses are now linked to school and district goals and connect to the teacher’s Individual Professional Development Plan. The criteria now include standards for on-line courses, which did not exist in the 1970s.

4. Serves as a resource to the School Committee on matters of collective bargaining.

The Superintendent involved the School Committee in the early stages of collective bargaining to establish School Committee proposals and set direction regarding union proposals. During the negotiations process, the Superintendent asked for executive sessions to update the School Committee and to seek further authorizations when needed. Collective bargaining is an area of strength for the Superintendent.

5. Ensures that all staff supervision and evaluation procedures are developed and carried out on a regular basis.

Through the office of Human Resources, the Superintendent received timely reports showing the level of compliance by supervisors to implement all contractual supervision and evaluations expectations. When contractual expectations were behind schedule, the Superintendent, or his designee, notified supervisors what observation and evaluation reports were due.

6. Demonstrates in hiring practices a thorough knowledge and understanding of personnel needs of the District.

The Superintendent placed a very high priority on hiring practices to ensure the District employed the highest quality personnel. The hiring process included college campus recruiting, attending minority job fairs, emailing electronic brochures to potential applicants, and rigorous screening/interviewing/reference checking. This past year, more principals have asked teachers to teach a demonstration lesson prior to making a job offer.

6. Effectively uses team approach to solving problems.

The Superintendent was deeply committed to creating a culture of collaboration that leads to on-going improvements in professional practice. He used a collaborative process to find better solutions to complex problems and to share best practices at all levels of the school system. At the teacher level, teachers collaborated in teams in their professional learning communities. Faculty members in each department and school met regularly to discuss important matters and share perspectives. At the district level, the Superintendent held weekly meetings with the central office team and bi-weekly meetings with all principals to discuss management issues and opportunities for improvement.

7. Builds employee job satisfaction through listening, encouragement and appreciation of good performance.

The Superintendent values ideas from all people. He believes that active listening can build understanding, respect and trust between people, and is necessary to provide accurate feedback/problem solving. This past year, the Superintendent continued his monthly meetings with teachers at his Superintendent's Roundtable to chat with teachers about whatever was on their mind. This past year, the Superintendent started two events to increase employee appreciation. In the fall, all teachers who received professional status were honored at a recognition ceremony. A few weeks later, all employees who had worked 25 years or more were honored by friends and colleagues at a second ceremony.

## **G. Communications and Public Relations**

*Public awareness is vital for the support of education in Lexington.*

*The Superintendent should ensure that staff, students, parents, and the community are kept informed of the mission, the needs, and the accomplishments of the school system.*

A strong, open and positive posture is needed in building public support.

### **G. Communications and Public Relations**

1. Fosters mutual trust and collaboration within the District, and between the schools and the community.

The Superintendent worked very closely with as many constituencies as possible to build trust and to understand the needs of school employees and residents. During this past school year, the Superintendent typically spent two to four nights per week attending various school and community meetings. Recently, he increased his visibility in the schools.

2. Works to improve internal and external communications.

The Superintendent regularly published a bulletin to communicate matters of district importance. The bulletin was sent to all school employees and was posted on the School District's web site. The Superintendent regularly spoke with the press to ensure accurate and timely reporting by the local newspapers.

3. Ensures that timely communication on important matters is provided to parents.

The Superintendent used the Global Connect system and parent list-serves to communicate with parents on important matters (e.g., the October 31/November 1 snow storm, major personnel changes, public hearings on the school budget, the announcement of the Wellman report, etc.)

4. Works collaboratively with parent/teacher organizations, site councils, and other school groups, sharing ideas, and promoting mutually beneficial projects.

Working with the School Committee, the Superintendent expanded the amount of training offered to Site Council members this past year. Training was expanded to include new Site Council members. In FY 10, training was provided to Site Council leaders only. Each month, the Superintendent met with all PTA presidents at their regular meeting to answer questions and update them on

important matters. The Superintendent met with the Clarke parents to discuss what qualities they were looking for in the next principal.

5. Establishes an outreach to diverse groups within the community.

More progress on this goal is needed.

6. Is visible to the community, gaining support for the schools.

The Superintendent attended some of the back-to-school nights, numerous meetings with town boards and committees, some musical events, some fine arts exhibitions, and the Patriots' Day parade.

7. Handles media relations skillfully.

The Superintendent always responded to calls from the press and answered questions to the best of his ability. He also called newspaper editors to alert them about important stories.