

May 11, 2010

TO: Lexington School Committee

FROM: Equity and Excellence Committee

RE: Progress Report

When Superintendent Paul Ash commissioned a detailed study of the achievement gap in September 2007, the Lexington Public Schools began its journey to provide educational excellence *with equity*. Measured by almost all aggregate measures of student achievement, the LPS were among the state's and the nation's finest public schools. However, the January 2008 report on the achievement gap disaggregated the measures of achievement to reveal the significant underperformance of particular subgroups of students, namely African Americans, Hispanics, students with disabilities, and English language learners. The Achievement Gap Task Force was formed in February 2008 and immediately began the difficult work of turning the research-based recommendations of the Achievement Gap report into a multi-year Action Plan. Presented to the School Committee and the public in May 2009, the Action Plan's detailed itinerary laid out the initial stages of the route to educational excellence for all students. The Equity and Excellence Committee (EEC) has furthered progress by monitoring the actual implementation of the Action Plan.

What follows this memo are 12 progress reports submitted to the Superintendent and the EEC by Lexington administrators responsible for action plan implementation:

- Kathy McCarthy, K-5 Literacy Dept. Head
- Karen Tripoli, K-5 Mathematics Department Head
- Meg Colella, MELP Coordinator, METCO Extended Learning Program
- Mary Anton-Oldenburg, Bowman Principal
- Jade Reitman, Bridge Principal
- Sandra A. Trach, Estabrook Principal
- Nancy Peterson, Fiske Principal
- Elaine Mead, Harrington Principal
- Louise Lipsitz, Hastings Principal
- Steven Flynn and Peg Mongiello, Clarke and Diamond Principals
- Natalie Cohen, Lexington High School Principal
- George Saxon, Interim METCO Director

A careful reader of these reports will find a dizzying and exhausting journal of the LPS journey toward excellence *with equity*. There is much to laud, much to assess, much to learn, and a great distance still to go. The reports are filled with specifics particular to different schools, curriculum areas, or programs; however, five major areas of focus, all of which overlap, encompass all of these efforts:

1. **Program Development:** Curriculum Reviews, Units of Study in Writing, CARE, Words Their Way, Fastt Math, Literacy Book Groups, Executive Functioning, Mentoring, METCO Scholars, METCO Seminars, and Zeroes Aren't Possible (ZAP) to name a few
2. **Data-Driven Instruction:** Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), AIMSweb Literacy Probes, Common Formative and Summative Assessments, Tiered Intervention Systems, Content / Grade-Level Professional Learning Communities, and Rubrics to name a few

3. **Intervention:** Intervention Block Scheduling, Leveled Literacy Intervention System, RTI (Response to Intervention), Three-Tiered Mathematics Intervention System, Intervention RAVE-O, Re-Grouping Math Stations, Culturally Relevant Instruction, and Freshmen Academic Club to name a few
4. **Extended Learning:** MELP (METCO Extended Learning Program), MASC (METCO After School Club), Math Path, and After School Homework Clubs to name a few
5. **Professional Development:** Spring Professional Development Courses (funded with federal stimulus dollars), Multiple Assessments Training, EDCO, PLC Development, RTI Study Groups, Multi-School PD Meetings, Common Assessment Conferences and Training, Data Team Development, and Harvard's Achievement Gap Initiative to name a few

As our journey continues next school year, it is time to increase extended learning opportunities and to systematically measure progress and report results. A school system striving to differentiate instruction can no longer accept 6 hours per day for 180 days as sufficient instructional/learning time for all students. Data gathering, so often vilified as impersonal and a goal unto itself, can and must be used to shine a light on each child's progress and to hold educators accountable for each child's excellence. Our core belief as educators, that academic ability is developable, not fixed by aptitude or biological endowment, must determine our actions. Race or poverty or other external factors are too easily used as excuses. We are public school educators; underachievement is NOT something beyond our control. Understanding the fact that academic ability is malleable, we will close the gaps in academic achievement among different groups of students when we have effectively taught all of our students how to learn by using high-quality teaching and instruction of rigorous, relevant curriculum in every classroom.

Members of the Equity and Excellence Committee

Steven Flynn, Co-Chair & Clarke Principal
 Paul Ash, Superintendent
 Mary Barry, Diamond Teacher
 Meg Colella, Bridge Asst. Principal
 Eddie Davey, Clarke Teacher
 Gail Grimes, K-5 Math Specialist
 Kathleen Martin, Harrington Teacher
 Anna Monaco, Clarke Middle Asst. Principal
 Jesse Richardson, Estabrook Teacher
 Sandra Trach, Estabrook principal

Vito LaMura, Co-Chair
 Martha Bakken, K-8 SPED Supervisor
 William Cole, High School Dean
 Rachel Cortez, Lexington Parent
 LaDawn Dubose, Boston Parent
 William Huff, Boston Parent
 Kathleen McCarthy, K-5 Literacy Department Head
 Phyllis Neufeld, LEA President
 Len Swanton, Bowman Teacher
 Amanda Turkanis, Fiske Teacher

Administrators' Progress Reports

Report from Kathy McCarthy, K-5 Literacy Department Head

This report reflects the work of two committees involved in the development of a multi-tiered intervention system for literacy learning and instruction K-5, the Literacy Leadership Committee and the English Language Arts Review Committee. A more comprehensive report about the curriculum review will be presented at the June 8, 2010 School Committee meeting.

Literacy Leadership Committee: What has been accomplished in the 2009-2010 school year?

- Met monthly to implement the Response to Intervention Plan for the Lexington Public Schools
- Expanded the committee to include a classroom teacher, a special educator, and literacy specialists
- Revised elementary literacy assessment plan to include benchmark assessments and progress monitoring of individual students:
 - Trained 70 teachers to administer AIMSweb literacy probes
 - Administered benchmark assessments to all students in first and second grade, all METCO students, all English language learner students, all special education students, and all students at Bowman three times
 - Hired six data managers, one at each elementary school, to manage the data and support teachers with assessment processes
 - Administered the *Developmental Reading Assessment* to all students in grades one and two to determine each student's independent reading level
 - Met by grade level teams with principals and reading teachers to analyze the data
 - Used the data to make instructional decisions about levels of intervention for students
 - Began progress monitoring of students receiving services in reading and special education
- Presented to MACURE (Massachusetts Association of College and University Educators) on the Lexington Public School RTI model on October 23, 2009
- Participated in a Boston University Course on RTI (17 Lexington Teachers)
- Supported teachers in the use of supplemental materials in classrooms to improve tier one instruction: *Comprehension Toolkits, Units of Study in Writing, Words Their Way, Phonics Teaching Resources*
- Provided administrators with professional development by Dr. Caroline Wandell to develop a common district definition of Response to Intervention
- Communicated to all staff about Response to Intervention, assessments and progress monitoring, please see attached FAQ sheet.
- Initiated planning with Boston University School of Education about literacy intervention professional development specific to Lexington
- Trained 30 teachers to use *The Leveled Literacy Intervention System*
- Collaborated with AIMSweb representatives to develop a specific data field for METCO students so that we can monitor our Boston students' progress
- Ordered materials for interventions, including a phonics program and professional texts

The K-12 English Language Arts Curriculum Review Committee:

- Developed a vision & mission for English Language Arts teaching and learning for all students in the Lexington Public Schools
- Conducted research on best practices in ELA instruction
- Developed and distributed a current curriculum practices survey to all teachers
- Analyzed ELA data from MCAS and AIMSweb

- Read many professional texts about best practices in literacy instruction
- Learned ATLAS Rubicon, a curriculum mapping system, to make the ELA curriculum accessible to all educators in the Lexington Public Schools

Next steps:

- Review and revise the Lexington Public Schools *Literacy Response to Intervention Plan* to reflect the problem-solving model—RTI as responsive instruction to meet the needs of students in all tiers of intervention
- Develop the curriculum to strengthen and differentiate tier one classroom instruction
- Assess all elementary students, K-5, using the AIMSweb benchmarking system in 2010-2011
- Provide additional professional development to reading specialists in coaching
- Plan for systematic phonics instruction in the early grades

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Report from Karen Tripoli, K-5 Mathematics Department Head

Action Plan Item: Develop a Tiered Intervention System for K-5 Mathematics

#1 Review the year-three recommendations of the Curriculum Task Force

The recommendations of the Mathematics Curriculum Task force drove the 2009-2010 work of the K-5 Mathematics Department.

#2 Complete a draft plan to provide consistent, system-wide multi-tiered instruction and intervention to improve learning for all students; articulate a clear continuum and coordination between general education (including METCO and ELL) and Special Education Services in mathematics.

The RTI mathematics study group was convened with membership including four mathematics specialists, three classroom teachers and the K-5 Department Head.

Members of the study group:

- Read and discussed Pyramid Response to Intervention by Buffum, Mattos, and Weber and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics News Bulletin articles related to RTI.
- Attended professional development opportunities
 1. Boston Area Mathematics Specialists RTI sharing meeting
 2. LPS course "Response to Intervention"
 3. One-day seminar "Response to Intervention Practical Strategies for Intervening with Students before They Fall Too Far Behind in Mathematics, Grades K-6"
 4. EDCO Mathematics Committee presentation by Kathy Richardson, author of Assessing Math Concepts and Developing Math Concepts.
- Reviewed the results of the "Student Support System Continuum for Mathematics" survey that was completed by teachers in June 2009.

The study group concluded that because research on RTI procedures in mathematics is very limited there is little information and material available that will assist us as we develop a model.

The study group has had many discussions about the lack of available time in the school day for Tier 2 intervention. This obstacle will need to be addressed.

#3 Continue evaluation of Tier One and Tier Two models including gathering more information and making recommendations for improving instruction at Tier One.

Through modeling and co-teaching, the elementary mathematics specialists continued to support classroom teachers as they delivered Tier One instruction. The specialists provided some small-group instruction for struggling students in Tier Two using a variety of instructional models.

#4 Summarize and present best practices in mathematics instruction at Tier One to elementary staff.

The elementary mathematics specialists assisted and trained staff in understanding the meaning of data and its relationship to appropriate differentiated instruction by participating in PLC work at the building level. The specialists provided embedded professional development for best practices through modeling and co-teaching in classrooms. Training in the use of the "K-5 Implementation and Differentiation Guides" was provided.

#5 Identify, pilot, and evaluate current and additional models for delivering Tier One and Tier Two Instruction.

This year, many teachers, teacher teams, and specialists piloted pre-assessment and flexible grouping practices to differentiate instruction. The department participated in the design and implementation of the METCO Extended Learning Program.

#6 Evaluate Tier Three and Tier Four Instruction (Special Education) Nothing was done this year.

#7 Provide joint professional development for Mathematics Specialists and Special Educators.

The Mathematics Specialists presented a workshop series, "Assessing Math Concepts" for general and special education teachers.

#8 Investigate and pilot intervention programs and progress monitoring tools.

The *Fastt Math* program was piloted in five schools at grade three, one school in grade four, and with some special education students and MELP students.

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Report from Meg Colella, MELP Coordinator, METCO Extended Learning Program

1. The following initiatives were designed and implemented to improve academic performance for Boston students:
 - a. The MELP students met on: October 22, 29; November 12; December 3, 17; January 7, 28; February 11, 25; March 11, 18, 25; April 1, 15
 - b. Dr. Paul Ash, Carol Pilarski, Meg Colella, Kathy McCarthy, and Karen Tripoli met on April 9, 2010 to discuss the program for 2010-2011
2. Program decisions are summarized as follows:
 - a. Program location will be at central office (4 classrooms have been identified) for the 2010-2011 school year
 - b. 36 students will be chosen using end of the year benchmark data in mathematics and literacy, AIMSWeb data, 2010 MCAS data, specialist and principal input
 - c. Ratio of students to teachers will be 4.5:1 (8 teachers, 4 IAs)
 - d. MELP schedule (21 sessions) will be determined by Carol Pilarski in conjunction with the school year calendar. Consistency is the over arching-goal
 - e. 3 summer workshop days will be used for curriculum programming and lesson design (@ \$150 a day per teacher)
 - f. Money will be requested by Kathy McCarthy for MELP mathematics and literacy supplies
 - g. Teachers will be paid at the amount of \$4400 and the coordinator at the amount of \$3000
 - h. Letter of expectation for student participation will be included in program information packet
3. Program challenges which remain have been identified as follows:
 - a. Hiring/Confirming Participation

- A. Secure 1 program coordinator
- B. Secure 4 literacy instructors and 4 mathematics teachers/specialists
- C. Secure 4 instructional assistants
- D. Secure 2 bus monitors
- b. Medical: Recommendations from Jill Gasperini:
 - A. The Director or Coordinator of an after-school program should require a registration form be completed that includes emergency contact information and health care concerns. The LPS Field Trip form is an example as to what information is needed. This form should indicate that a school nurse may not be available while the child is participating in the program.
 - B. The Director will need to speak to any parent who indicates that their child should have an emergency medication available, such as an EpiPen or inhaler. Parents should be instructed that the child will need to have an extra inhaler in their backpack to administer to themselves if necessary. If a child has a life-threatening allergy, the Director should plan with the parent to determine how the child's EpiPen will be available for the Director during the program.
 - C. To comply with state law, The LPS Medication Policy will need revision to identify which after school programs will be covered by the policy. Any after school-sponsored program designed for elementary school children should require EpiPen training for non-licensed staff, as most elementary children do not have self-administration status.
- 4. Next steps are as follows:
 - a. Future Dates: May 6, 27; June 10, 17
 - b. Create and implement a parent survey - May 2010
 - c. Review end of the year mathematics and literacy assessments, compare with entrance assessments (Kathy McCarthy and Karen Tripoli) - May & June 2010
 - d. Select students to participate using input from data, specialists, and principals-May & June 2010
 - e. Invite students to participate - Summer 2010
 - f. Group students-Summer 2010 (determine structure: literacy & mathematics or just one subject area)
 - g. Design curriculum and lesson plans - Summer 2010
 - h. Determine expectations and structure for communication among MELP staff and classroom teachers-Summer 2010
 - i. Establish and review bus routes-Summer 2010 (Overseen by METCO Office)

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Report from Mary Anton-Oldenburg, Bowman Principal

Current status of PLCs

- PLCs have been established with smart goals at each level K-5, in addition we have a Behavioral PLC (which includes guidance, nursing, psychologist, some special educators) looking at corelates to student achievement
- Building primary focus is English Language Arts with a particular focus on writing given previous MCAS results particularly in the area of short answer and open response

PLC details

- K – beginning of the year, letter naming fluency, mid – fall, sound fluency, currently phonemic awareness (levels 4/5 phoneme segmentation)
- 1 – essential reading strategies for struggling readers
- 2 – Improving the quality of reader response journal entries, working with students to use textual references
- 3 – narrative response, using rubrics to provide feedback to students
- 4 – identifying and writing about topic and details in fiction and non-fiction
- 5—responding to writing prompts with textual evidence

- Behavioral – investigation of number and reasons for behavioral incidents and pro-social recognitions, design and development of interventions to support pro-social behavior

Grade	Focus	Formative Assessment	Promising Instructional Practice	Data	Results
K	Address assessed weakness in phonics and phonemic awareness (individual and grade level)	Marie Clay, Concepts of print, letter naming	K Team time (needs based regrouping), guided reading, phonics intervention practice	Aimsweb summative data	90% success with letter naming smart goal; working on sound identification and phonemic segmentation smart goal
1	Assess and address struggling students success in mastery of concepts of print and early reading strategies	Common Grade Level Rubrics checklists Bi-weekly running records	Creation of common grade level rubrics, RTI with reading specialists, Guided Reading, Phonics Lessons, Triple dosing of instruction METCO additional support only if struggling, additional monitoring	DRA 3x, Running records, Comparison on rubrics	RAVE-O in all four first grades, RTI addressing needs of lowest 20%, increased frequency/intensity of instruction for lowest performing
2	Increasing students ability to create appropriate deep responses to reading journal prompts	Pre-assessment DRA	Re-grouping based on formative information, collaborative creation of best practices lessons, collaborative assessment of	Aimsweb overall performance data, writing prompts	Rubrics established and taught to students, Aimsweb data suggests improvements in student understanding of text

			student writing, common rubrics		
3	Reading comprehension in multiple choice	Teacher created common formative assessment	Instruction in use of inference in understanding and responding to complex reading	MCAS Writing prompt assessments	Smart goal #1 achieved, currently on refined goal
4	Understanding non-fiction text, increase accuracy of response to reading in writing	Teacher created formative assessment tasks, rubrics for common scoring	Direct teaching of comprehension strategies, use of common language in teaching response to writing, use of common graphic organizers, common scoring of prompts, regrouping for instruction	MCAS, Aimsweb, formative assessments	Students have demonstrated an increased ability to identify topic and details. Aimsweb data suggests increase in reading comprehension scores
5	Writing open response answers	Common formative performance task	Share reading and writing tasks, blind scoring using rubrics, anchor text answers, common lesson planning, strategy instruction for reading/writing	MCAS, formative assessment tasks, Aimsweb data	Teachers have assessed profiles of different student needs, working to reshuffle students to provide targeted assistance.
Behavioral	Reduce behavioral incidence by 20%, track interaction between frequency	Collect, analyze behavioral incident records and pro-social behavioral	Targeted intervention small groups designed to re-teach pro-social behavior, targeted whole class/grade level	Incident reports, pro-social reports, Open Circle instruction	Initial data analysis suggests there is not a strong correlation between behavioral and academic issues – however, one question is about the degree to which

	of behavioral incidences and student achievement	records	intervention based on assessed need. Teacher professional development		behavioral/social issues disrupt teaching time, therefore increasing the challenge for other struggling students.
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Aimsweb Reports

Aimsweb data suggests that Bowman School, at all levels is making progress towards its literacy goals, with progress in literacy comprehension being reflected at the 4/5 level most strongly (as is suggested by Aimsweb personnel is the most effective area for this data). First grade students have made better than average progress in the CBM-R (reading passage), showing strong growth, however, they have demonstrated weak performance in phoneme segmentation. This data is in the process of analysis, as it appears that our most proficient independent readers have scored less well in this area. We are investigating what causes this phenomenon. We continue to work with literacy book groups, PLCs and grade level clusters to analyze this data.

Current Initiatives to Support Struggling Students

At Bowman School, the following initiatives/new programs and/or investigations are "school sanctioned". Many of these are teacher initiated and voluntary, or school/district offered and voluntary

Initiative	Group	Impact	Voluntary/ Mandated
Aimsweb	All academic teachers	Provides data for progress monitoring and benchmarking	mandatory
Literacy Book Groups Teacher chosen shared texts to read and develop a common literacy language/structures	All Faculty Meeting time provided	Development of common literacy practices, including cross-class observations, literacy book groups, development of shared book lists, increased use of guided reading, increased differentiated instruction STRONG POSITIVE MOVEMENT TOWARDS BEST PRACTICES in	mandatory

		literacy	
First Grade RAVE-O	First grade team, AP, P, librarian	Development of student comprehension at the word, sentence level, increased understanding of linguistic components of written language	Voluntary
Intervention RAVE-O	Special Education Teachers	Increased understanding of the linguistic elements of language and their use in comprehension METCO component – strong positive results (gr. 4/5)	Voluntary
Leveled Literacy Intervention	Reading Teachers	Targeted intervention at tier 2A students (lower 25%) in small groups	Mandatory (but not always implemented consistently)
Re-grouping Math Stations	Math specialists, Gr. 1 - 3 teachers	Differentiated instruction with regrouping for math instruction (within classroom, across classroom)	Voluntary but encouraged by coaches
Math Block interventions	Gr. 4-5 Math Specialists	Differentiated Instruction based on math assessments, common formative assessments	Voluntary
Words their Way Implementation	Gr. 2 - 4	Phonetic word study, including frequent formative and summative assessments	Voluntary
Kathy Richardson Math Assessments	Gr. K-2	Formative assessment of Math reasoning and intervention strategies	Mandatory at Gr. K, 1, 2
Ffasst Math	Gr. 3 some 2/4/5 special education	Reinforcement program for math fact learning	Mandatory at Gr. 3

Co-Teaching Sped/General Ed 4/5 classroom	Gr. 4/5 class teacher Special educator Collaborating gr. 5 teacher, Gr. 4 Teacher	Collaborative inclusion classroom with special educator and general educator to provide extensive support to special education students and targeted METCO students	Voluntary
Executive Functioning	ALL	Strategy use beyond medication for supporting disorganized students	Faculty meeting time, voluntary extensions
Culturally Relevant Instruction	ALL, supported by Barbara Nobles	Understanding of METCO program, relevant cultural actions and	Mandatory /Faculty Meeting time, voluntary expanded committee
Mentoring Program	ALL teachers	METCO and struggling student mentors	Voluntary (in process)

Examples of FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT as used at Bowman...

Other	Grade	Formative Assessments/Assessments used formatively
	K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathy Richardson math assessments • DRA • Running records • Marie Clay concepts of print • Writers workshop checklists
	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathy Richardson Math Interviews • Formative assessment in Everyday Math (math boxes) • Music baseline – hearing melody • P.E. fitness grams • Self-assessments of working levels, self-assessment of personal goals • ELL baseline on retelling stories • RAVE-O formative assessment (whole group, small group)
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathy Richardson interviews • Everyday Math formative and summative assessments • DRA • Running records • Words their Way Assessments (formative groups for word study) • Rubrics for writing (Gr. 2 PLC)
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • math summative and formative assessments • Words their Way formative assessments • some use of DRA for reading levels, formative reading assessment • common formative reading assessments
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • math formative assessments • open response pre/post assessments • words their way weekly word sort assessments
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRA progress monitoring • Pre-Assessments for writing, math • Open response rubrics • Math quizzes

Initiatives/Work to Support Student Achievement

Math Specialists Initiatives	<p>Grade One</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Title 1 identification through common assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pull out through rank ordered list • targeted intervention in-class support ■ Teacher Coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unit goals based on content standards • station activities selection based on content standards with differentiation based on need • UB George, student friendly rubrics
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	<p>Grade Two</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ same as grade one <p>Grade Three</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fastt math support and student monitoring ■ Co-teaching with emphasis on priority content standards ■ Limited intervention based on teacher recommendation from common formative assessments ■ Integrated support with special education liaisons <p>Grade 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fast Math support for MELP and special education students ■ Intervention block used to reteach content based on common assessments (unit tests) ■ In class support based on teacher-created formative assessments ■ Coaching support for Special Education liaisons. <p>Grade 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fast Math for MELP and special education students ■ Intervention blocks used to reteach content standards based on formative (teacher created) and common (unit) assessments ■ Coaching for Special Education liaisons ■ Creation of "UB George" – student friendly goals sheet to use across district ■ Coaching support for differentiation of class work <p>District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MELP teacher ■ Support MELP students in the school
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Report from Jade Reitman, Bridge Principal

Action Plan Item: Implement data-informed, action-oriented Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in elementary schools.

- Principal met frequently with one PLC providing support while Assistant Principal met with another
- Principal met with each grade-level PLC four times using protocol document:
 - Identifying common learning & common assessment
 - Identifying differentiated instructional strategies
 - Developing the SMART Goal
 - Providing interventions
- Principal facilitated school-wide PLC on long composition
 - Developed, administered, scored, and analyzed first school-wide writing assessment winter and spring
 - Developed common expectations, sequence & scope, rubrics, and instructional strategies

Action Plan Item: Provide 600 minutes per week of literacy instruction at grades K-2, 450 minutes of literacy instruction per week at grades 3-5, and 300 minutes of mathematics instruction at grades K-5.

- This has been accomplished by decreasing social studies and science
- Block schedule developed with staggered subjects by grade level to allocate resources better

Action plan Item: Develop a multi-tiered intervention system of literacy learning and instruction at the elementary schools.

- Principal participated in the Literacy Leadership Committee and ELA Curriculum Review
- Principal met with special education staff and reading staff to provide in-depth explanation of tiered intervention strategies
- Principal met monthly with reading specialists and the literacy curriculum coordinator to review data and identify levels of intervention at Tier II
- Implemented AIMSWeb K-5
- Teachers administered formative assessments: kindergarten (rhyme, Letter ID, Letter Sound Association, Concepts of Print); grades 1-5 (Scott Foresman unit assessments)
- Administered Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) at all grade levels
- Implemented leveled literacy interventions at Tier II (LLI)
- Identified underperforming students and provided interventions
- Utilized Comprehension Toolkits in reading and Lucy Calkins Writing Units
- Implemented Words Their Way word study at all grade levels
- Implemented reading fluency software in Resource Room
- Implemented collaborative project with speech pathologists & kindergarten teachers to provide Tiered Intervention in Phonemic Awareness to all kindergarten students
- Implemented Interactive Notebook teaching/learning strategy at grade 4 & 5

Action Plan Item: Develop a tiered intervention system for K-5 mathematics.

- MCRTF School Liaison introduced Differentiation Notebook
- Principal met monthly with math specialists & math curriculum coordinator to review data and identify levels of interventions at Tier II
- Implemented FASTTMath software program at grade 3 and grade 4 SPED
- Piloted Fraction Nation software program in one grade 5 classroom
- Provided before school time for MELP students to use FASTTMath
- Provided Tier 1 interventions at grades 3-5 as part of PLC work

Action Plan Item: Develop and implement a mentoring program for all K-8 METCO students.

- Established a study committee
- Developed a mentor program for METCO students and recommended Lexington students
- Participated in METCO Extended Learning Program (MELP)

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Report from Sandra A. Trach, Estabrook Principal

Professional Learning Communities, including work on formative assessments:

One of our main school improvement goals is to grow our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs.) Professional Learning Communities are the process by which we analyze, understand and improve academic achievement for all of our K-5 students. Our PLC Teams follow a common PLC protocol that was derived from Mike Mattos's work (lectures and Pyramid Response to Intervention, 2009.) From this protocol, our teams collaborate around a six step process: developing team norms, establishing a data reality, creating a SMART goal, taking instructional action,

engaging in progress monitoring and devising an intervention plan. Many of our PLCs are organized around grade level teams, with specialists involved in each team. Occupational Therapy, Nurses, Guidance, Behavior, ELL, Art, Music, Librarians and Physical Education specialists participate in district PLC teams.

There are exciting happenings as a result of the PLC process. All teams are examining current student performance (i.e. the data reality.) From this, SMART goals and instructional plans have been developed. Teams are taking action in a wide variety of ways including, but not limited to: creating visual prompts, looking at student work, selecting or devising student rubrics, studying authors' craft in writing, conferencing with students, merging existing teacher resources to develop common lessons, selecting common graphic organizers, collaborative scoring of student work, using MCAS questions for open response writing, drawing upon non-fiction resources and surveying staff in regard to positive behavioral practices.

Estabrook PLCs are using existing formative assessment tools, as well as creating new ones when needed. In literacy, we continue to use the DRA and Scott-Foresman assessments, in accordance with the district benchmarking expectations. We have initiated AIMSweb implementation in the primary grades, as well as begun AIMSweb with MELP students, ELL and special education students who have reading objectives on their IEPs in Grades 3-5. -PLCs are frequently conducting pre-assessment activities and developing instructional plans from the data and information. Teams are employing varied paradigms of learning, including co-teaching, flexible grouping and push-in models of instruction. Post assessment is regularly conducted to formatively measure student understanding of the attained concepts and skills. Students are grouped and regrouped to continually assure that they are making measurable progress with their literacy objectives.

In mathematics, our PLCs use existing formative assessment tools, such as the Kathy Richardson assessments and Everyday Math unit assessments. Math dialogues, in-class assignments and homework are invaluable in formatively assessing each learner's academic progress. Report card grades and MCAS scores are also examined as part of overall student performance. Our literacy and mathematics formative assessments help us know which student need extensions, re-teaching or additional practice. This is an ongoing process within each PLC, unique to each grade level of learners. Grouping and regrouping students is a practice used to meet a wide variety of student needs. Grouping is short-term in duration and changes based on evolving student need. Student work and the data are regularly reviewed, as part of the class or team's overall instructional plan to meet student needs.

Midyear, each Estabrook PLC completed a team reflection and engaged in an informal schoolwide team sharing. The staff also engaged in a professional development opportunity on Response to Intervention. This introduction to RTI offered us an overview of the common research on RTI; a common lexicon on RTI; and a common approach toward learning and intervention for all students. Since our midyear PLC reflection and our RTI professional development, PLCs are broadening their goals and taking on multiple focal points of data. The Response to Intervention approach is beginning to stretch across disciplines to improve learning.

In May, the Estabrook staff will have the opportunity to engage in professional development on executive functioning. Chris Kaufman, Ph.D., an expert speaker on learning and the brain, will present to our staff on the role of executive functioning in the learning process and discuss elements of his new book on executive functioning. This will benefit our students learning in tier one of the RTI approach (tier one = all students.) The staff will engage in a formative, end of year reflection on their PLC process and look ahead to next steps in light of their learning on RTI and executive functioning this year.

K-5 Multi-tiered Intervention System for Literacy Learning and Instruction:

Estabrook employs the district's K-5 Literacy RTI System, with push-in and pull-out support K-5. Estabrook continues to examine and expand our paradigms of literacy instruction to include co-teaching, centers, flexible grouping and strategic skills-based instructional grouping. The Literacy Leadership Committee continues to study the Comprehension Tool Kit, (Harvey) and implement the comprehension best practice strategies in classroom practice.

K-5 Multi-tiered Intervention System for Mathematics:

Estabrook employs a co-teaching model for K-5 mathematics shared between the teachers and math specialists. Teachers engage in common planning, lesson development, pre-assessments, strategic flexible grouping, post-assessment and reflection opportunities. Data is collected and examined and discussed, both formatively and at the end of the units of study. This process helps us determine next instructional steps, within a class and within teams.

METCO Extended Learning Program (MELP):

There are presently seventeen students in our METCO program at Estabrook. (3 Kindergarteners, 2 Grade One students, 2 Grade Two students, 4 Grade Three students, 6 Grade Five students.) Of these students, four students ranging Grades 3-5 participate in MELP. In literacy, student interventions include: small guided reading groups, flexible grouping practices, Tier 2 Literacy Support and Special Education support. In mathematics, teachers cite the most effective interventions as: small grouping, flexible grouping, previewing upcoming concepts and skills, FASTMath and reviewing previously learned concepts. For students in MELP, teachers note improved attitude, confidence and achievement based on unit assessments, student assignments and student observations since the beginning of the school year.

Mentoring Programs:

Several years ago, Estabrook had a successful mentoring program for students in the METCO program, but it did not sustain. The topic of mentoring was raised this year at our school's Leadership Team and there was great interest in revisiting the program. The elementary principals will also discuss the topic further this year.

Special Education:

In the fall of 2009, Estabrook had 42 identified students, 32 of whom were Resource / Speech /O.T. receiving and 10 of whom were CARE program students. As of January 28, 2010, Estabrook had 38 identified students, 25 of whom are Resource / Speech/ O.T. receiving and 13 of whom are CARE program students. As of April 30, 2010, Estabrook continues to have 38 identified students, 25 of whom are Resource / Speech and O.T. receiving and 13 of whom are CARE program students. Special Education services include push-in and pull-out services based on student IEPs.

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Report from Nancy Peterson, Fiske Principal

School-wide Initiatives

- **Mentoring Program:** All Boston students as well as recommended Lexington students participate in a mentoring program. Students meet with volunteer staff member for 30 minutes per week to discuss/work on any issues pertaining to the child and his/her success in school.
- **Professional Learning Communities:** All Fiske staff participate in Professional Learning Communities. Smart Goals focus on increasing students achievement and eliminating an achievement gap.
- **Academic Vocabulary:** Grades 1-5 have participated in a workshop on Academic Vocabulary and are beginning implementation of Marzano's six-step program for teaching Academic Vocabulary.
- **Teacher Web Sites:** Every teacher at Fiske has created a classroom/subject web site where parents can find classroom news regarding curriculum, homework & special projects.
- **Participation in Metco Extended Learning Program (MELP)**

- K-5 Three tiered Intervention System – In initial stages. Insufficient staffing for tier three: one to one instruction.

School-wide Math Initiatives (Math Specialist along with classroom teachers):

- Vocabulary group with ELL teachers and Reading Specialists - we each are meeting weekly with identified ELL fourth graders who also have other issues (special education, processing issues) to review vocabulary.
- Grade 1 and 2: Based on Quarterly Math assessments, classroom data, and EDM assessments, struggling students are identified and pulled for additional math instruction. Students are grouped flexibly based on need. Groups have included special education students, ELL and METCO.
- Grade 3 Math Intervention Group: Co-taught with special educator - weekly 45 minute intervention block based on unit post assessments in mathematics. We review common problems from the post-assessments. Group membership is variable based on assessment and has included special education students, METCO students, and Lexington resident minority students.
- Grade 4 Math Flexible Grouping: Each unit of EDM is assessed and grouped by the assessment results for instruction. Four days each week, Math Specialist co-teaches with a classroom teacher working with students who are struggling. Group varies according to assessment and has included ELL, special education, METCO students.

Kindergarten: Focus on Language Arts skills: All kindergarten students who are in the regular classroom setting for at least four academic hours per day will master the following skills:

- Rhyming
- Letter ID
- Letter / sound associations
- Concepts of print
- Retell

Initiatives implemented:

- Bi-weekly Kindergarten Team collaboration to identify instructional needs based on formative assessments.
- Teacher consult with literacy specialist
- Homogeneous skill groups during literacy block
- Additional small group instruction, 1 or 2 times per week (15 min. per session), for students identified "at risk" . Literacy specialist will provides additional intervention with identified students when available
- Re-evaluate learning needs of all students at Kindergarten Review meeting in February (with SPED Team)

Data Collected through common formative assessments:

- Rhyme assessments
- Letter ID - upper case
- Letter ID - lower case
- Letter Sound Associations
- Concepts of Print
- Aimsweb

Grade One: Focus on Literacy: All students will be able to independently identify unknown words while reading four DRA levels beyond their beginning of the year level.

Initiatives implemented:

- Commitment by grade level team members to meet daily with lowest scoring students
- Collaboration of team to implement reading strategies:

- Reading strategies bookmarks/posters
- Story retelling shapes
- Just Right books sent home each day with which to practice
- Reading Logs
- Frequent communication between team members to check in with progress
- Running records and progress monitoring more frequently for lowest students.

Data collected to inform initiatives:

- Benchmark Aimsweb probes on reading accuracy and phoneme segmentation
- Developmental Reading Assessments
- Progress Monitoring and Strategic Monitoring (Aimsweb) for students who are scoring in the below average range

Formative Assessments created/implemented:

- Aimsweb Progress Monitoring
- DRA
- Running Records
- Scott Foresman unit assessments
- Writing samples
- Oral Reading checklist
- Dictations

In September, 22 students were identified as at risk. Based on midyear assessments, eleven of the original 22 students have met the goal. Of the remaining 11 student, two have moved away and nine are presently working with both the classroom teach and a reading specialist.

Grade Two: Initial DRA and math assessments identified students at risk in math and language arts.

Initiatives/Strategies Implemented:

• Literacy

- * Evaluated students' individual comprehension scores (subsections) on initial DRA. Based on assessment students are regrouped into specific skill groups for instruction
- * Implemented direct instruction of comprehension strategies: common vocabulary, scaffolding of strategies, common grade level books to use for modeling; common grade level formative assessments
- * Reworked literacy groups for grade level-more children receive small group needs for specific strategies
- * Mid year: Evaluated DRA & Aimsweb assessments. As a result-all students who did not meet benchmark plus students who made benchmark but still could use reading support will be receiving small group support (4 X 45) with a reading specialist or ELL teacher.

• Math

- * Kathy Richardson assessments; modify Everyday Math diagrams to help students make the connections between math curriculum and math stations.
- * Based on assessments the grade two team worked with math specialist to formulate flexible math support groups based on needs
- * Implemented quarterly assessments (Math Committee). Analyzed results. Students not making progress receive additional small group time for more explicit instruction.

Data/Formative Assessments Collected:

- *DRA scores
- *Aimsweb
- *Kathy Richardson assessments
- * Formative Assessments including
 - wipe boards
 - exit slips
 - place value assessment
 - standards check-in assessment
 - rubrics for report cards
- Quarterly math assessments: Teacher developed place value assessment (common formative assessment)

Beginning of year-33% of students were not at DRA level 16 (beginning of second grade benchmark) in September.

Mid-year-26% of the students were not at DRA level 24 (mid year second grade benchmark) in January (the majority of students went up significantly in the DRA levels-specifically around the areas of retelling and making connections portion of the formative assessment).

Grade Three : Initial language arts and math assessments identified students at risk.

Initiatives/Strategies Implemented:

- Flexible grouping/differentiated instruction for math
- Development of essential questions in math, science, and social studies
- Implementing Marzano's six step Academic Vocabulary program
- Intervention block for math with Julia Hendrix and special educators
- Implementing Lucy Caulkin's Writer's Workshop to develop students' writing stamina and topic development

Data:

- Pre and post math assessments for each unit
- Academic Vocabulary binders
- Consulting with reading specialists on Aimsweb
- Student writing samples

Formative Assessments:

- "Pyramid Vocabulary Game"
- White board assessments
- "Ticket out"
- "Thumbs up, thumbs middle, thumbs down"
- Jigsaw
- Self-Assessment checklists
- Center work to guide instruction

Grade three identified 18 students "at risk" at the beginning of the year and, after implementing strategies, now have 11 (a number of which are currently on IEPs).

Grade Four: Initial analysis of MCAS scores indicated need to provide additional/new support for students at risk in math.

Initiatives:

- Pre-assess before each math unit.

- Use data to determine individual needs of students as well as strengths.
- Biweekly team meetings with math specialist to plan instruction.
- Group students across grade level by needs for instruction.
- Close collaboration with Special Education Team to discuss concerns and needs.
- Differentiated homework.
- Contact/check-ins with parents.
- Administer post-test.
- Concepts and skills re-taught to those students who did not master the objectives.
- Small group instruction.
- One on one conferencing.

Data/Formative Assessments

- Within each unit, formative assessments spontaneously given to assess learning and to inform instruction (white board assessments, thumbs up/middle/down, checking starred problems in math journals, observation, participation, etc.).
- Pre and post assessments
- Analyze results recorded on assessment checklists and as presented via Inspire Program.

At the beginning of the year, 23 students had been placed in the low performing group for math. Students are pre-assessed before we begin every unit. As a result, their performance has varied depending on the concepts and skills being addressed for each particular unit. At this point in time (Unit 7 fractions), we have 14 out of the original 23 who remain in the lowest group. Some have moved up a level (some two levels) for different units.

Grade Five: Initial analysis of MCAS scores indicated need to provide additional/new support for students at risk in math. Goal: To bring all students to a level of proficiency in mathematics. Students will master the skills listed in each of the units "Essential Questions"

Initiatives/Strategies Implemented

- PLC determines Essential Questions determined for each math unit of study
- Pre-assessment administered for each unit of study
- Based on pre-assessment data, students across the grade level are placed into skill- based groups. Students demonstrating highest needs receive more intensive small group instruction. Students are regrouped for instruction four days of the week.
- Post Assessments are used to determine students who need further support. This support occurs during the Intervention Block on Fridays.
- For students demonstrating success the intervention block is used to increase achievement on Open Response Questions.
- Teachers, instructional assistants and Special Educators collaborate and co-teach to ensure all students are receiving instruction in the skill area needed.

Data collection and Formative Assessments

- Grade four MCAS
- Benchmarks assessments
- Pre and post assessments
- Entrance/Exit slips determine students who need additional assistance
- Assessment of performance on open response questions
- Study Island web based math – students progress individually
- Math Journal pages / Math Boxes
- White Board Assessments

Number of students Identified at risk at the beginning of the year through 4th grade MCAS results and end of year math assessment: 24. Number of students presently identified at risk: 8

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Report from Elaine Mead, Harrington Principal

This update adds to the work at Harrington that was reported on February 10, 2010. During the eight weeks since that report, the Harrington faculty has continued to work together in Professional Learning Community (PLC) teams. As a school, we have worked with Chuck Christensen, a leadership consultant, to deepen and refine our collaboration skills. Grade level PLC teams have used data from common assessments, planned instruction, and used flexible groupings to differentiate instruction. Faculty participation in professional development at the school and district levels has been on going. While the Harrington Faculty continues to promote achievement of all students, there is a targeted focus on providing effective interventions for students in under performing sub-groups: Special Education, English Language Learners, and METCO.

A major driver in this effort is the PLC (Professional Learning Community) process. Please note that all the teams are continuing to refine promising practices that were initiated in previous years. Listed below are the major new efforts that have been initiated this year at various grade levels and departments at Harrington. Using formative assessment and collaborative analysis of data is the common theme in the work this year. Items in bold represent additions since the 2-10-10 report.

1. Kindergarten PLC used common formative assessments in literacy to identify needs in the fall. Small group instruction has been collaboratively planned and implemented across all classrooms. A home component, that includes increased communication and materials for home practice, was developed to support at-risk students. AIMSWEB data has been used in January to monitor progress. K Team worked with Chuck Christensen to develop a core mission and norms for collaboration. They have used technology to organize and analyze data. The team is refining their annual assessment timeline and expectations for student achievement over time. The current PLC work focuses on aligning the most powerful assessments, core lessons, and home/school connections.
2. Grade One PLC is using student response systems as a tool to provide immediate feedback to students and gather data from formative assessments in reading and mathematics. Grade one teachers are participating in formative assessment workshop in mathematics. These Kathy Richardson assessments are being used to identify and monitor progress on at risk students. Mathematics assessments are being videotaped and used to create electronic portfolios. DRA levels and AIMSWEB data has been used to form flexible groups and to target intervention. The First Grade Team worked with Chuck Christensen to develop core values for collaboration. The team met to review mid-year reading achievement data. Using Aimsweb and DRA data, all students had made progress as outlined in the SMART goal that was established. The team has expanded their work in writing by using Lucy Caulkins units of study and working with the literacy coach. Grade One is planning to meet with Grade Two teachers to share student work in writing.
3. Grade Two PLC is coordinating mathematics interventions for struggling learners with mathematics specialist, special education and classroom teachers. Using common assessments they have identified students who need additional instruction in priority learning goals. A communication and tracking system has been developed to monitor instruction and progress. Grade two collaboratively analyzed DRA data to form groups and plan targeted intervention for students below grade level. Second Grade Team worked with Chuck Christensen to develop a mission statement and norms for collaboration. Collaborative analysis of data continues. Using February interview assessment data in mathematics, the team determined common areas

of weakness and planned instructional interventions. Efforts to improve communication among service providers who target at-risk students continues.

4. Grade Three PLC is using the FASTT Math program to improve automatic recall of basic number facts. Math station work and targeted small group support is planned in collaboration with mathematics specialist. In October, 80% of third graders were rated as "under performing" in their automatic recall of addition facts. In April that number was reduced to 21%. Collaborative planning of assessment and instruction of non-fiction standards in ELA with a focus on main ideas/details. The Grade Three team integrated non-fiction science texts into their instructional plan. The team developed a summative assessment for main idea and details. Collaborative planning to differentiate instruction that targets skills needed for MCAS open response and short answer was a focus of their work. Collaborative analysis of summative assessment revealed significant improvement from the fall data (30% to 64% mastery), however, the team was not satisfied and developed interventions to target non-fiction reading comprehension. The most recent assessment in April showed that 86% of the students demonstrated mastery!
5. Grade Four PLC has collaboratively planned for flexible grouping across the entire grade level based on pre-assessment data in mathematics for multiplication and division. Coordination of planning and assessment among regular education, special education and mathematics department for the leveled groupings. FASTT Math is used with targeted special education and MELP students. Collaborative analysis of DRA data resulted in planning and implementation of reading strategies, summarizing and inferring, in all classrooms. The Grade Four Team worked with Chuck Christensen to develop a core mission and norms for collaboration. They also developed a plan for shared leadership and meeting facilitation. The team developed a unit on making inferences based on facts in non-fiction reading. Post assessment data confirmed that 86% of students hit target using multiple-choice assessment and 93% hit target in open response assessment. The team pre-assessed the fraction unit in math and regrouped based on data across the grade level.
6. Grade Five PLC is applying strategies learned in Sheltered English professional development to content studies. Collaborative planning of reading strategy instruction for small groups based on DRA scores. FASTT math is used with targeted special education and MELP students. Assessment and instruction is planned to target skills that were difficult for students based on 2009 MCAS data in grades four and five. Data to celebrate - two grade five students who were on IEPs no longer qualifying for special education services! The Fifth Grade Team worked with Chuck Christensen to develop a purpose and ground rules for collaboration. They also focused on decision-making as a team. The team met with grade five teachers at Estabrook to discuss their model of assessing and regrouping in mathematics. The team developed a pre-assessment in mathematics for coordinate graphing and volume. Leveled groups were formed once a week for extension and re-teaching as needed. The groupings were flexible and changed weekly based on student performance.
7. Reading specialists collect and analyze data using the AIMSWEB program for all students in K-2 and for Special Education, ELL, and MELP students in grades 3-5. Tier 2a and 2b services are adjusted based on results of these benchmarks. The reading specialists are monitoring student progress and have helped develop a common understanding of expectations for grade level reading performance that utilizes AIMSWEB and DRA data.
8. ELL teacher is targeting instruction in K-2 on priority comprehension strategies such as retelling, sequencing, main idea/detail. (12 students receive this instruction) In addition, ELL teacher is pre-teaching key vocabulary for math and language arts to ELL students in grades 3-5. (13 students)
9. Art specialist is providing targeted instruction to develop student understanding of common academic language and mathematical concepts of shape, symmetry, and measurement.

10. MELP - five students from Harrington attend the Extended Learning Program. The mathematics specialist from Harrington, a MELP teacher, shares progress with METCO social worker so that she can connect hard work with success.
11. METCO Social Worker- Using materials based on the work of Jeff Howard and The Efficacy Institute; grade five METCO students are going through the "Get Smart " curriculum to make connections about behavior, effort and achievement. Grade five students participated in a dialog with METCO Scholars from LHS.
12. OT has been training and consulting with staff regarding "sensory diet" techniques to use in the classroom with children who have various special needs and those who have significant difficulty with sustained focus and attention. A Boston University grant was written and approved to purchase materials for a "calming corner" in various classrooms. We have several students who need frequent breaks from classroom activity and/or have challenges with emotional regulation that interferes with their ability to focus on learning. The "calming corners" are being implemented in selected classrooms to decrease time away from class for these students. OT, guidance and nursing are collaborating with classroom teachers in this effort.
13. RTI Study Group for Mathematics - Comprised of teachers and mathematics specialists. This group includes two teachers from Harrington: our mathematics specialist and one of our kindergarten teachers.
14. Guidance counselor is gathering baseline data on "student resiliency" levels using teacher, parent and student surveys. The teacher survey has been completed.
15. Behavior data is gathered and analyzed by guidance and school administration to plan interventions to increase student engagement in learning and improve peer relationships. Individual positive behavior plans have been implemented as needed to increase positive and productive classroom engagement and decrease disruptive, non-productive behaviors. These intensive plans have been developed for 2% of the school population.
16. School psychologist PLC is studying the quality and impact of recommendations made as a result of testing.
17. School attendance is monitored as outlined in the new elementary attendance policy. Parents are contacted to discuss the importance of on time arrival and consistent attendance. In January, the number of students with attendance problems is reduced. Current data analysis indicates that on-time attendance has improved significantly from last year. (March 09 data- 8% of students were tardy 10 or more days. March 10 data – 3% of students were tardy 10 or more days.) Absences have not improved. Students with 10 or more absences in March 2009 were 5% of total enrollment and March 2010 was 11%. The swine flu and family vacations are two reasons that attendance has declined. There are 27 students (7% of school) who have two years of poor attendance. The nurse, guidance, and administration are meeting to plan targeted interventions for these students and families as needed.

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Report from Louise Lipsitz, Hastings Principal

Action Plan Item: *Implement data-informed, action-oriented Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in elementary schools*

Below is a summary of PLC team work at Hastings. SMART Goals are included along with tasks, interventions, data collection regarding goal. There are two pilots at Hastings that will positively impact PLC work. First, retired teacher and Simmons professor Barbara Scotto has met with teams and serves as a resource focusing on differentiating

instruction for all students. She started her work, meeting with grade 4 and 5 teachers and visiting classrooms to serve as a coach. She has met regularly with grade three as well, collaborating as teachers develop a rubric for writing and to review student work products. The second pilot is to utilize faculty meeting and principal afternoon sessions to share PLC work over the course of the spring months. This format has provided a more authentic and collaborative vehicle for sharing the work of the teams. Several teams have already shared their work, using data graphs, spreadsheets and charts to highlight their goals and results. Teachers will provide colleagues with rubrics, formative assessment ideas, instructional strategies, and student-specific information in order to assist in improving learning at other grade levels.

Action plan Item: Create Professional Learning Community (PLC) time for classroom teachers in grades K-5. All grade levels have at least two 30 minute blocks weekly when they are available to meet as PLC teams. Most have hour-long blocks when students are at specialist classes at least once a week.

Below is a grade level breakdown of the PLC work thus far. Note that several grade levels have shifted curriculum area and have not developed SMART Goals for their second focus.

Kindergarten: SMART Goal: Improve their phonics skills by meeting district benchmarks or increasing their skills set by %20 in the following areas: upper case letter recognition, initial sounds in words, sound/letter relationships

- Kindergarten teachers have used January Aimsweb data to assess student level and plan instruction

Grade 1: SMART Goal: Students scoring in emerging or developing comprehension categories on DRA will improve to independent level in retelling by June 2010.

- Analyzed DRA, reviewed and instructed in sequencing and retelling skills
- Created rubrics for scoring retelling and early comprehension skills
- Collaborated in planning for literacy units to focus on comprehension and building independence in students

Grade 2: SMART Goal: Using specific questions in Everyday Math unit assessments that target a specific skill needing to be mastered, 80% of students will meet proficient level on post assessments.

- Utilized Everyday Math unit assessments as formative task
- Taught in clusters based upon data
- Math Specialist rotated in classroom to support student learning and teacher instruction
- Administered teacher created assessments using Assessment Assistant software. (In January 2010, agreed to reverse assessment planning to use Everyday math unit assessments as summative and software generated tasks as formative.)
- Math pre-post assessment and lesson planning will continue.

February 2010: shift to science notebook writing

Grade 3: SMART Goal: All third grade students will achieve 80% or better on end of unit assessments in mathematics or show at least 15% improvement from unit pre to post assessments.

- Fasttmath at third grade level supporting improvement in fact automaticity. Teachers use the laptop cart once a week in order to assure 3 sessions weekly for each child
- Developed record keeping and skill breakdown for units in order to group students.
- Weekly intervention for math uses flexible grouping with Math Specialist.
- Parents trained to facilitate math games weekly to offer additional practice and enrichment.

January 2010, Shift to writing: SMART Goal: Third grade students will write descriptive paragraphs using specific characteristics of a paragraph and following a scoring rubric for completion of the piece. Teachers developed a rubric for the paragraphs that can be shared with students and used to assess the work samples. They have reviewed student work as a team and developed instruction to meet student needs.

Grade 4: SMART Goal: Fourth graders will improve their reading comprehension through the use of meta-cognitive strategies. All students will increase their independent reading level 1-2 DRA levels by June 2010.

- Shared multiple strategies for students to use to focus on thinking while reading.
- Developed and taught visual strategies for organizing thinking before, during and after reading
- Analyzed student work products demonstrating different levels of comprehension.
- Discussed instructional strategies to support students struggling with comprehension

January 2010, Shift to writing: Shared student work, analyzing and listing areas of strength and need. Shared resources and teaching tools for improving writing such as sentence structure, descriptive language.

Grade 5: SMART Goal: 95% of fifth grade students will increase one level from fall to spring administration of the DRA.

- First focus on summarizing after reading: practiced using various genres of reading.
- Second focus on reflection: what is important and why.

January 2010, Switch to science notebooks and writing across the curriculum. Focus on vocabulary, concept comprehension and ability to explain to a peer

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Report from Steven Flynn and Peg Mongiello, Clarke and Diamond Principals

Action plan Item: Implement data-informed action oriented Professional Learning Communities at secondary level

SMART GOAL: Design, implement, and analyze two middle school district-wide common assessments per content/grade level PLC by June 1, 2010.

Implementation Plan: What are the specifics steps you are going to take? What resources are needed?

1. Principals will convene the curriculum cabinet/leadership team (completed)
2. Principals/Supervisors will create a timeline for completion of common assessments (completed)
3. Provide training and materials in common assessment design, data collection and analysis (completed)
4. Develop action plan for development of common assessment (completed)
5. Administer common assessment by December 21, 2009 (completed)
6. Bring student work/assessment results to the January 14, 2010 professional development afternoon (See below/ completed)
7. Analyze results (student work) (completed)
8. Revise instructional practices to inform future instruction and assessment design (in progress)
9. By Feb 5, develop action plan for development of a summative assessment (in progress)
10. By March 4, design a summative assessment (completed)
11. Administer summative assessment (upcoming/need to determine summative testing dates for all contents)

12. Bring student work/summative assessment results to the May 13, 2010 professional development afternoon (will not be meeting on May 13th)
13. Have joint department meeting on May 10 to discuss progress and confirm final assessment date and collaboration plan

January 14, 2010: Joint Professional Development Day

Clarke and Diamond met in the content areas and looked at their Fall common assessments. The goals of the meeting:

- To provide opportunity for collaboration across schools and grade levels for the purpose of aligning curriculum, discussing instruction and creating common assessments.
- To utilize data to improve instructional practices and student mastery
- To articulate key power standards to be mastered by students in each grade level and in each subject by June 1, 2010

The content groups began the process of designing the summative assessment. The administration provided the following times for upcoming collaboration:

- February 1: Joint Department Meeting
- March 4: Half- Day Professional Development
- March 15: Joint Department Meeting
- April 5: Joint Department Meeting
- May 10: Joint Department Meeting (Development of Summative Assessment should be completed)

Additional Clarke Information: Data Collection as of May 1, 2010 for the following school based interventions at Clarke: Child Study Team, Clare Data Team, Math Intervention, Grade 7 Reading Intervention Pilot, Guided Study and Learning Center. In addition to these interventions, Clarke's content area teams continue to meet to discuss and align curriculum, develop common assessments and analyze data.

Weekly Child Study Meetings

- Three members of the team took the LPS PD Course- RTI 6-12
- Reformatted the child study forms for more efficient data gathering
- Defined two tiers of interventions for presentation to staff in Fall of 2010
- Defined skills/areas targeted by Learning Center and Guided Study
- Grade 6: 8 referrals to Child Study, no SPED referrals recommended by Child Study Team
- Grade 7: 18 referrals to Child Study, 3 SPED referrals recommended by Child Study Team
- Grade 8: 5 referrals to Child Study, 1 SPED referral recommended by Child Study Team

Clarke Data Team:

- Experimented with data management software tools including Inspiredata, MS Excel and eInstruction's Classroom Performance System (CPS). Actions included disaggregating data by academic standard, disaggregating data by student subgroup, and studying student classroom achievement in comparison to student MCAS scores.
- Researched, developed and delivered a presentation identifying levels of achievement of Clarke Middle School students on MCAS testing. Presentation included overall scoring and separation of student scores by selected subgroups. The presentation was given to the entire Clarke faculty.
- Worked with U.S. History and Government content team to develop a short standards based unit with flexibly grouped interventions or enrichments for all students. Decisions for student intervention and

enrichment were made based on collected data. Data from intervention sessions shows that students who previously did not meet standards were able to successfully meet standards after interventions. Planning process, procedure, and outcomes were presented to the entire Clarke faculty.

- Collaborated with Clarke content area PLC teams to discuss progress on developing common assessments that target specific standards and can be accurately and effectively measured.
- Shared experiences of selected content area PLC teams with matching teams at Diamond Middle School.

Math Intervention:

- 8th grade: 2 X week - 14 students and 4 X week- 14 students
- 7th grade: 2 X week - 14 students and 4 X week- 10 students
- 6th grade: 2 X week - 10 students and 4 X week- 25 students

Math Intervention: Fraction Nation Pilot (Tom Snyder Productions):

- 35, 6th grade students
- Pilot window 11/23/09 - 1/22/10 (approx. 7 weeks)
- 2- 4 times a week, approx. 15-25 per day (depending on technical difficulties & curriculum)
- Computer based (wireless laptop computers with headsets)
- Pre Assessment to determine whether to start on Lesson 1 or Lesson 28, out of 64 lessons
- Format: Lesson, then practice (if not done well, repeat of practice), then assessment (passing = 75%, if they don't pass, there are two more chances to practice and pass assessment. Students will then re-visit the lesson and the teacher can re-teach and assess.
- A variety of Teacher Reports were extracted from the program in order to supplement instruction for each individual student and/or groups of students. This allowed the teacher to monitor progress.

Grade 7 Reading Intervention Pilot

- (8) 7th grade students(general education) who scored Needs Improvement or Below on the 2009 ELA MCAS
- Meet 2x per week with the Reading teacher
- Targeted Skills include; Vocabulary usage - using SAT prep words, engagement of vocabulary using multiple senses and repetition, recreational reading, essay reading to support composition writing, and writing summaries

Guided Study

- The set curriculum for this class includes executive functioning, memory techniques, study skills, test taking skills, note-taking skills, reading comprehension, goal setting and meeting expectations. Recommendations for this class come from counselors, teachers and the Child Study Team. Students were added to this class depending on need. Other students finding success, were taken out of the class.
- In Grade 6 – 1st Quarter - 7 students. 4th Quarter - 4 students
- In Grade 7 – 1st Quarter - 16 students. 4th Quarter - 13 students
- In Grade 8 – 1st Quarter - 8 students. 4th Quarter - 7 students

Learning Center

- A learning environment for general education students needing more individualized support. Targeted skills include: Academic accommodations and strategies, content reinforcement, skill building, and content previewing.
- Learning Center teacher works closely with content teachers on current learning objectives
- In September 2009 **25 total students:** 8th Grade – 12, 7th Grade - 11, 6th Grade - 2
- In January 2010 **36 total students:** 8th Grade - 16, 7th Grade – 13 , 6th Grade - 7
- During first semester 12 students were added to the Learning Center:
- At the conclusion of first semester - 3 students (all 8th Grade) had their number of sessions decreased. One student (8th Grade) had her number of sessions increased.

- As of **May 2010** The Learning Center has **46 total students** enrolled: 8th Grade – 15, 7th Grade – 20 6th Grade - 11
- During second semester 11 students were added to the Learning Center: 7th Grade – 7, 6th Grade - 4
- One student (8th Grade) was dismissed due to qualifying for an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Of the returning Learning Center students (**31 total students**): Approximately 5 students will have their number of sessions decreased:

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Report from Natalie Cohen, Lexington High School Principal

Action Plan Item: Design, implement, and analyze one high school common assessment per PLC team by June 1, 2009 (completed) and evaluate, revise, and implement one high school common final summative assessment per PLC team by June 1, 2010 (in progress since July 1, 2009, now completed).

- Team from High School attends Common Assessments Conference (Completed in 08-09)
- Conference Team then develops a timeline for faculty, working in PLC's, to develop, administer, and analyze a common assessment. (Completed in 08-09)
- PLC's design, administer, and analyze their common assessment. (Completed in 08-09)
- Leadership Team helps Principal develop a timeline for PLC work on common assessments in 09-10 (Fall 2009)
- PLC's focus on revising and perfecting final summative assessment for their respective course during 09-10.
- Training with Larry Ainsworth on common assessments in Oct 2009.
- Analyze and revise their respective course final summative assessment using Ainsworth's tools and processes by May 2010.
- Align course final summative assessment with Priority Standards of the course and school-wide rubrics by May 2010.
- Administer course final summative assessment in June 2010.
- Leadership Team met with Mike Wasta January 14th all day to clarify next steps for PLCs for rest of Spring 2010.
- Added focus on Big Ideas in addition to past work on Priority Standards.
- Developed a lexicon of PLC and assessment terms for HS.
- Drafted a clarifying statement from Leadership Team of expectations and objectives for PLC work for the rest of the school year.
- Developed, examined, and refined Big Ideas and Essential Questions for the course in an effort to "weed the garden."
- PLC's focused on revising and perfecting final summative assessment for their respective course during 09-10 (completed).
- PLC's analyzed and revised their respective course final summative assessment using Ainsworth's tools and processes.
- PLC's aligned course final summative assessment with Priority Standards, Big Ideas, and school-wide rubrics.
- Met with Mike Wasta March 4th to clarify PLC goals and strategy for the end of this school year and for next year.

Activities planned for the next three months:

- Meeting with Mike Wasta on May 13 will focus on PLC practices, measuring adult behaviors and their impact on student outcomes. (We will fine tune our definition of an exemplary PLC.)
- Protocols and practices for integrating special education department members into general education PLC groups and classes will be determined on May 13.

- A pilot study has been designed that will include special and general educators teaching (assessing, employing data, implementing interventions, reteaching) in two Level 2 sections of English and History students during the 2010-2011 academic year.
- Three teachers involved in the pilot will attend a Data Summit this summer (in a train-the-trainer mode); they will work as point persons, building momentum in our charge to become a more data driven, collaborative school.
- By September 2012 100% of the PLC's at LHS will meet our definition of exemplary.

Action Plan Item: Establish a METCO Scholars achievement and mentoring program at LHS. We have taken the following steps since July 1, 2009:

- Informed LHS staff about the METCO Scholars program and identified the Cohort One students
- Planned and executed the kickoff event for METCO Scholars Cohort One August 10, 2009
 - Morning teambuilding/trust-building session with Project Adventure
 - Afternoon motivation and planning session at Endicott College
- Organized METCO Scholars to be present and be mentors to 9th graders on opening day at LHS
- Planned and held weekly meetings for METCO Scholars focusing on leadership skills, academic achievement, being a role model, mentoring younger METCO students, and preparing for college application and matriculation.
- Arranged for three guest speakers to address the METCO Scholars: Cecil Cox (LHS '81, Harvard '85), Taisha N. Sturdivant (Brandeis 2012), and Reggie O'Hare-Gibson (National Slam Poetry Champion).
- Provided academic, emotional, and college search support to METCO Scholars as needed.
- Developed METCO Scholars Blog (<http://metcoscholars.blogspot.com/>)
- Helped six senior Scholars apply for the POSSE Scholarship program – all six became semi-finalists and five become finalists.
- Trained Scholars themselves in mentoring of younger students.
- Established mentoring component for Scholars to mentor younger students
 - Visited two elementary schools to work with METCO 5th graders
 - Organized and held X block mentoring sessions with METCO 9th graders
 - Planning currently for visits in May 2010 to the other four elementary schools.
- Monitor achievement data for Scholars relative to same students in previous years and relative to METCO subgroup and LHS student body as a whole – we actively share this data with the Scholars themselves for their feedback and reaction and to help reward, inform, and motivate them.
- Recruit, interview, and select second cohort of Scholars (goal of 25% increase in participants)
- Develop advisory board to guide METCO Scholars next year.

Activities planned for the next three months:

- Visit four more elementary schools to work with METCO 5th graders
- Continue to meet with 9th graders at X block study hall to discuss relevant topics of achievement and METCO Program
- Recruit, select, and train adult mentors
- Establish adult mentoring component
- Organize program based community service activity (single day)

Changes in the original goal or plan: The need for mentoring of younger METCO students became more acute and our students expressed their desire to give back, so we have altered the design of the Scholars mentoring component and are implementing it earlier than planned. This has led us to move the mentor training materials earlier and we have shifted some curriculum from winter to spring. We are implementing the adult mentoring

component for our juniors. We are opening the METCO Scholars to 10th graders next year for extremely qualified candidates. We have made attendance more of a priority for acceptance to the Scholars program.

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Report from George Saxon, Interim METCO Director

Lexington High School

- METCO Scholars - First cohort has had a fairly successful year so far. Participation in summer training session was excellent; Scholars also were present on first day of school to be a presence for 9th graders to see; Scholars have become more autonomous as the year has progressed; On January 4th visited Harrington and Bowman to speak with 5th graders from Boston; anticipate visits to all six elementary schools by year's end; X block 9th grade program starts the week after Feb vacation and will involve 2 scholars per week visiting the 9th grade METCO study hall to speak on a specific topic like "the importance of homework." A number of our Scholars have been reaching their goal of Honor Roll so far this year and several had their best report cards ever in quarter 2.
- FAC (Freshmen Academic Club): students who continue to receive a D or F on their report cards, are required to attend this club every Wednesday during X block in room 611. METCO Counselor, on Mondays, sends out an all school email to freshmen Teachers reminding them of the club and asking them to please send METCO Counselor and staff member involved with FAC, any work students need to make up, hand in, work on, during the club. Students are allowed and encouraged to see teachers during this block but must show proof that they did visit teacher during this time. If students don't show up, they are assigned a detention with METCO staff. In its first year; introduced by Mr. Villegas in September.
- MASC (METCO After School Club): In its third year. 1st meeting will be Tuesday, February 9th at 2:40. This is a time for sophomores, who have received a D or F for 2nd quarter, to come and complete assignments OR meet with teachers.
- Renewed focus on METCO Contract - every 9th grade METCO student has been presented each year with a strict contract covering behavior and performance. However, the follow through of having parents and students sign and return it as well as referring back to the contract often, has not happened. Meetings were held Dec-Feb by Deans and METCO staff with parents of students having behavioral/discipline records at LHS to reaffirm the contract terms.
- Tightening up on late bus passes - METCO staff announced to students in October that students who fail to "sign up" and be approved for a late pass by 1:30PM each day would have to find their own way home. This has reduced the opportunity for students to waste their afternoons hanging around LHS
- Follow through on discipline - three students with serious disciplinary records were removed or talked into removing themselves from the METCO program.
- Freshmen METCO Seminars, Quarter 1: For the first time, with the assistance of the Guidance Director, Mr. Eggleston, our Boston students were scheduled into a weekly METCO freshmen seminar with Mr. Villegas. Topics such as: Understanding Peer Pressure & Cultural Differences, Positive Behaviors for Student Success and Post-secondary Planning (how to get from high school to college...grades, college entrance exams, letters of recommendations, school involvement, community service, etc)

- Assembly with METCO students - held in the fall in the aftermath of poor behavior in the Dining Commons, all METCO upperclassmen summoned to meet with METCO staff during X block
- POSSE Scholarships - 5 students were semi finalists for POSSE Scholarships after being encouraged/recruited by Mr. Villegas to apply; that is by far the best performance we have had on that program to date.
- PSAT participation - once again a coordinated effort by Guidance and Mr. Villegas to have all METCO juniors take PSAT in October.
- Attendance issue = N's: At the start of the 3rd quarter, Mr. Villegas began printing out weekly attendance and speaking with students who have unexcused tardies and/or absences, asking questions and informing them that monitoring of attendance and calling home would follow if attendance doesn't improve.
- Field trip: Mr. Villegas, along with 4 sophomore students, attended a Martin Luther King Jr. Event @ Price Water House Cooper. It was a day for students to not only learn about the accounting world but to listen to speakers talk about the importance of building relationships...how building positive relationships can help you succeed in school and in your career.
- Two additional schoolwide interventions at LHS have been having an ancillary benefit to METCO students
- Zero's Aren't Possible (ZAP) Program – 9th grade team teachers of English and History keep kids afterschool that day if their homework is not completed on time. They stay afterschool to complete the work.
- Dawn Patrol – Students who are behind on work are assigned by Deans to spend x block in a directed study from 7:45-8:30AM on Wednesdays to complete the missing work.

Middle Schools: Academic performance at the middle school level continues to be good. During the first quarter, of the 62 METCO middle school students, 21 made the honor roll (all A's and B's) and 9 had (one C) honorable mention. The second quarter saw a slight drop. Nineteen students made the honor roll and six made honorable mention. At both middle schools, Mrs. Cody continues to run the Afterschool Homework Clubs one day a week. She is at Diamond on Tuesday and at Clarke on Thursday. During this time, students are urged to connect with teachers for extra help and to complete overdue assignments.

MathPath, a new initiative designed by EDCO, is a voluntary summer math academy for middle school Black and Hispanic students that will draw from EDCO communities that participated in the planning of the project. Its goal is to get more students of color into a full Algebra I course in 8th grade. The program will start this summer and will run one month.

Elementary Schools: MELP has worked well. Students have enjoyed attending the sessions, and have worked hard with the teachers. There is some indication that student attitudes about learning are being positively affected. The elementary social workers continue to work with our younger students to help them with the transition to Lexington Public Schools. They instill the Efficacy curriculum principle that Intelligence is something that you can acquire, not something with which you are born. Also, they meet with students during lunch to talk about issues that might impact learning. Additionally, the social workers sometimes act as a liaison between the school and parents

