

FY'23 Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Progress Report

This report below provides a progress update on the [WPS SOA Plan](#).

Section One: Brief Narrative Update on Progress to Date

WPS has seen evidence that, while gaps continue to exist, our implementation of Evidenced Based Practices (EBPs) is leading to the desired gap closing for targeted students. Using disaggregated data over multiple years comparing the performance of students with disabilities against all students in WPS, the following data points have been seen in both district-specific measures (STAR data) and DESE data.

District Level: *MADESE Student Progress metrics for students in grades 3 - 8 in mathematics are rated at 55.4 for the subgroup “students with disabilities” and the Student Progress rating for All Students in the same grade level band in mathematics is also 55.4. Students with disabilities in WPS are making more than the average amount of progress year over year according to DESE and a similar rate of progress as the All Students subgroup. A multi-district review (using DESE generated comps) of this data set utilizing the MADESE District Profile tool for 2022 indicates that WPS’s data ranks 2nd in the group of 11 comparable school district for student growth in this domain with trend data for WPS student performance average scaled score data from 2018 - 2022 trending up for students with disabilities.*

Similarly, using the DESE DART tool, SGP trends for students with disabilities in grades 6 - 8 have increased from 2018 - 2022 in grades 6 (average SGP of 42.3 to 42.7) and 7 (53.2 to 61.5) across this four year span which is inclusive of the pandemic. However, grade 8 student SGP for the same subgroup has fallen from 45.5 to 34.5 during the similar span of time. This lowered performance trend is seen in general education as well and is widely viewed to be a reflection of the cumulative nature of the grade 8 Math MCAS test structure state-wide. On a very positive note, on the 2022 District Report card, the 8th grade score decline is dramatically reversed by grade 10. WPS is very pleased with the 2022 Grade 10 All Student Mathematics Progress score of 54.7 and the 2022 Grade 10 Student Subgroup Score for Students with Disabilities of 69.6. It is also noted that no students in Grade 10 scored in the Not Meeting Expectations category of the Mathematics MCAS exam in 2022.

Grade Level Specific Data: *Mathematics scores grades 3 - 8 have improved for students with disabilities from 2021 - 2022.*

- 24% of students with disabilities in grades 3 - 8 were in the Not Meeting Expectations category for Math MCAS in 2021.
- 16% of students with disabilities in grade 3 - 8 were in the Not Meeting Expectations category for Math MCAS in 2022.
- This rate of improvement exceeds the rate for All students in the same category across the same years (8% for students with disabilities vs. 2 % for all students)

Based on 2022 MADESE reporting, students with disabilities' SGP as a subgroup is 2 -10 % lower than the average for the entire grade in all three grade levels:

- **Grade Six Math** - average SGP for the grade was 50 with 71% of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations.
- Non-disabled students had a SGP of 53. Students with disabilities had a SGP of 43.
- This represented a 10 point gap.
- **Grade Seven Math** - average SGP for the grade was 63 with 66% of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations.
- Non-disabled students had a SGP of 63. Students with disabilities had a SGP of 61.
- This represented a 2 point gap.
- **Grade Eight Math** - average SGP for the grade was 44 with 63% of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations.
- Non-disabled students had a SGP of 47. Students with disabilities had a SGP of 34.
- This represented a 13 point gap.

Classroom/Student Specific Data: *At the classroom level, individual student data is also analyzed in an ongoing manner utilizing the STAR assessment platform. Using the reporting tool in STAR that allows for individual student data sets to be followed over time and compared to other subgroups and sorted by specific MA curriculum standard, data teams at TMS led by curriculum specialists are using this information to inform student grouping, instructional approaches and assessment techniques. Specific reports such as the "State Standards Mastery grade level report" provide data on individual strands of the curriculum standards from a "Beginning Mastery" level, "Developing Mastery" level and "Secure Mastery" level. Individual students with disabilities are then followed via the "Star Growth Report " via three times a year benchmarking to document change in proficiency over time. Teachers are able to calculate an individual SGP and group students into growth and proficiency cohorts to match instruction to needs.*

The Winter 2023 Star Math Growth Report indicated that of the 58 students with disabilities who were assessed, 54 Met Growth expectations and all 54 were identified as making “High Growth”.

*These **outcomes flow from the implementation** of EBPs in our SOA plan by increasing the planning and preparation time that general education teachers have in the new TMS schedule to meet with their special education partners, providing additional professional development in mathematics to special education teachers who directly instruct or support the instruction of mathematics and ongoing District-wide work to ensure curriculum alignment to the MA Curriculum Frameworks*

***Implementation successes** include wide adoption and acceptance by students, families and staff of the new school schedule, increased and more consistent planning time for staff and a systemic focus on the curriculum and instructional materials being used District wide.*

***Implementation challenges** include the need for many students in the Students with Disabilities subgroup to have significantly extended instruction, extensive preview and review of content, additional resources for instruction and exploration, and the limitations of the MADESE reporting structure and MA curriculum frameworks to account for these individualized learning differences. WPS continues to work towards ameliorating these structural and organizational obstacles for students as they impact outcomes for students with disabilities across content areas and grade levels. Student proficiency levels continue to rebound from the pandemic and while the gap of 2% - 10% persists, movement and monitoring of individual students has begun to have a positive impact.*

Section Two: Update on FY'23 Implementation of Evidenced-based Program Areas

1) Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English Learners (SOA categories D and E)

Evidence-Based Program 8: Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English learners *	
	Implementation Phase
A culture that exists to support the use of data to drive instructional decisions and identify and address inequities. Data is gathered and analyzed to identify student-specific academic, linguistic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs	Full Implementation
Adequate time is scheduled for meaningful collaboration between paraprofessionals, general educators, special education staff, and ESL staff	Full Implementation
All English learners have access to appropriate ESL services and are able to access the general curriculum and tiered systems of support	Full Implementation
All instruction, interventions, and supports are evidence-based, culturally sustaining, and universally designed	Partial Implementation
IEPs for students with disabilities are designed and implemented to ensure that all SWDs are able to access and make progress within the general curriculum and students are provided tiered support, as appropriate	Full Implementation
Professional development is provided on meeting the specific needs of students with disabilities and language learners, anchored in a shared commitment to providing the least restrictive environment for students	Full Implementation
Schedule ensures students have access to services; all minutes and service delivery expectations are met	Full Implementation
School schedules incorporating co-teaching models provide ample time for co-teachers to build relationships, clearly define roles, and work collaboratively (i.e., through common planning time)	Full Implementation
Staffing models for co-teaching reflect evidence-based practices in co-teaching	Full Implementation
Tier 1 academic expectations are articulated and known by all, and provide equitable access to high quality, coherent standards-aligned curriculum. Within tier 1 there is a range of supports to meet the needs of all learners and provide access to grade level content. In addition, there is a range of tier 2 and 3 academic interventions (aligned with tier 1 curriculum/programming) targeted to specific skills/needs of the student and identified by assessment data.	Full Implementation

Thurston Middle School has identified highly qualified general education math teachers for the instruction of math to students with disabilities. Students who require substantially separate instruction are instructed by special education teachers who are DESE licensed and receive professional development specifically in the instruction of students with disabilities in the content area of math. These special education teachers are supported by grade-level math specialists. The revision of the TMS schedule to add a WIN block has been successful in providing opportunities for differentiated support and intervention to students based on ongoing assessment data. The District also finds the STAR assessment tool useful and will continue the professional development and training for staff in the use of this ongoing formative assessment tool and the data it provides to better inform planning and instruction going forward. This work has helped to develop a culture in the school supporting the use of data to drive instructional decisions and identify and address inequities.

2) Increasing opportunities for educators and support staff to engage in a cycle of continuous improvement, utilizing district and school teaming structures (SOA categories B and E)

Evidence-Based Program 15. Increasing opportunities for educators and support staff to engage in a cycle of continuous improvement, utilizing district and school teaming structures *

	Implementation Phase
All teams receive robust training and ongoing support in implementing effective team processes, use of protocols and effective data use as part of a cycle of inquiry	Full Implementation
District and school leadership prioritizes collaborative planning time (e.g., common planning time) for teams of teachers and support staff, and provides ample time and resources for them to function effectively and efficiently	Full Implementation
District and schools systems include teams (e.g., instructional leadership teams) tasked with monitoring the district and school-level implementation and impact of key evidence-based strategies	Full Implementation
ESL teachers, special education teachers, other instructional specialists, and support staff have regularly scheduled time to collaborate with general education teachers to plan, interpret data, and monitor the progress of specific student groups	Full Implementation
Instructional staff use the same instructional cycle to monitor student learning and adjust instructional strategies in order to ensure that all students are mastering grade-level content	Full Implementation
Teams make ongoing data-informed decisions to develop and make adjustments to instructional approaches and program implementation (e.g., data from formative and summative assessments, student work, classroom observations, surveys of students, teachers, and parents)	Full Implementation

The TMS Master Schedule was re-structured in 2021 -2022 to provide for increased teaming time, more common planning time for teacher preparation and opportunities for students to work with teachers in smaller groups. A WIN (“what I need”) block was developed that allows for smaller ratio, personalized instruction and remediation for all students including students with disabilities. The Curriculum and Instruction Review Cycle has commenced the initial stages of a formal Curriculum Review process for Mathematics District wide. Special Education Staff will be included on the committee and participate in the review. A major focus of the review is the adoption of evidence based materials at the middle school that are culturally sustaining and universally designed. Teams continue to receive training and ongoing support by math specialists implementing protocols and data use as part of a cycle of inquiry who work with each of the TMS grade level general education teams. This planning time and professional support has allowed teacher teams to make ongoing data informed decisions to develop and make adjustments to instructional approaches and program implementation in a more robust manner than previous years.

3) Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum (SOA categories E and F)

Evidence-Based Program 4. Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum *	
	Implementation Phase
Building systems for ongoing two-way communication with families and stakeholders regarding materials and student progress	Full implementation
District has a process in place for frequently monitoring of the extent to which the intended curriculum is being delivered in classrooms across the system	Full implementation
Engaging in a curricular landscape analysis to assess the extent to which the district is implementing high-quality, standards-aligned core curriculum materials, as defined by CURATE or a similar independent, research-based, third-party reviewer	Full implementation
Initial professional development to support educators' understanding and use of new high-quality, standards-aligned curricular materials	Full implementation
Regularly scheduled and ongoing professional learning and support for educators to implement new materials effectively, utilizing grade-appropriate, well-scaffolded assignments	Partial implementation
School teams (e.g., grade-level teams, ILT) receive training and support to effectively utilize collaborative planning time to utilize data (e.g., from formative and summative assessments, looking at student work, classroom observation data) to engage in a continuous cycle of improvement	Full implementation
Schools have a team (e.g., instructional leadership team, curriculum implementation team) tasked with leading, planning, and monitoring the implementation and outcomes of curricular materials	Full implementation
Utilizing a regular selection and adoption process that allows ample time for teachers and administrators to reflect upon the evidence base	Full implementation

The WPS is currently engaged in a K-12 Math curriculum review process. One major focus of the review is identifying and implementing high-quality, evidence-based curriculum materials for the middle school. Once the curriculum review is complete and accepted by the School Committee, WPS will target additional investment to purchase and utilize new materials effectively, developing appropriate and well scaffolded assignments, assessment and support materials for students.

Section Three: Updated budget information on FY 23 expenditures for each Evidence based program

Evidence-Based Program 8. Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities and English learners *

	BUDGET ITEM (FY23)	FTE	FOUNDATION CATEGORY	LOCAL FUNDS (Including Ch. 70)	ESSER II	ESSER III	FEDERAL GRANTS	STATE GRANTS	OTHER
1	Math Spec	3	CLASSROOM & SPECIALIST TEACHERS	310504					
2	Special Ed	1	CLASSROOM & SPECIALIST TEACHERS	111804					

Evidence-Based Program 15. Increasing opportunities for educators and support staff to engage in a cycle of continuous improvement, utilizing district and school teaming structures *

	BUDGET ITEM (FY23)	FTE	FOUNDATION CATEGORY	LOCAL FUNDS (Including Ch. 70)	ESSER II	ESSER III	FEDERAL GRANTS	STATE GRANTS	OTHER
1	Annual sut		INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, EQUIP. & TECH.	39086					

Evidence-Based Program 4. Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum *

	BUDGET ITEM (FY23)	FTE	FOUNDATION CATEGORY	LOCAL FUNDS (Including Ch. 70)	ESSER II	ESSER III	FEDERAL GRANTS	STATE GRANTS	OTHER
1	Curriculum		PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	30000					

Section Four: Other uses of additional Chapter 70 aid

Your district received **\$283,679** in additional Chapter 70 aid in FY23.

Is the total amount of locally appropriated funds (including Chapter 70) reported in your EBP's budget(s) for FY23 (i.e., the number you were asked to calculate and jot down in the previous section) equal to or greater than the amount of additional Chapter 70 aid your district received in FY23?

Select One: *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Section Five: Updated information on progress in engaging family and caregivers

Implementation of Strategies Supporting Family/Caregiver Engagement *		Implementation Phase
Collaborating with families to develop and implement a comprehensive approach to supporting meaningful involvement as children progress through the school system and into postsecondary settings		Full implementation
Collecting formal and informal data from families and students (e.g., annual school climate surveys, focus groups) to identify issues and concerns and using those data to drive continuous improvement		Full implementation
Creating safe spaces for families to participate as partners in meaningful decision-making at the district and school level—providing supports, as needed, to effectively participate		Full implementation
Developing robust partnerships with community organizations and agencies and connecting families with them		Full implementation
Ensuring school and district buildings are welcoming environments for families (e.g., signage, parent center, interpreters and translated materials)		Partial implementation
Ongoing PD for district and school staff in effective family engagement that addresses skills and knowledge, developing trusting relationships, addresses beliefs and values, and reflects the cultures and values of families in the community		Partial implementation
Prioritizing the hiring of staff with diverse backgrounds that reflect cultures in the community (e.g., administrators, instructional and support staff, bus drivers, custodians)		Full implementation
Providing professional development and time for educators to build meaningful relationships with families, such as implementing parent-teacher home-visiting programs		Not a component of our approach
Training family volunteers from diverse neighborhoods and backgrounds to serve as mentors/cultural brokers to help other families become more engaged in schools		Not a component of our approach
Utilizing multiple communication strategies and tools (e.g., face-to-face meetings, WhatsApp, Classroom Dojo, Zoom conferences) to engage with families in ways that work best for them		Partial implementation

The district has made progress on the items identified in the Implementation of Family/Caregiver Strategies rubric. Previous partial implementation has been addressed via: Ensuring school and district buildings are welcoming environments for families with particular attention to signage, access to interpretation and translation. For example, the District has engaged in a multi-year contract for additional translation services with Lexikeet and completed and published the translation of many key district level documents, resources and report cards into all major languages spoken in the district. Similarly ongoing professional development for district and school staff in effective family engagement addressing the skills, knowledge to develop trusting relationships, addressing beliefs and values to reflect the culture and values of families in the community is ongoing. For example, in November 2022, the entire district engaged in professional development for a full day with Dr. Richard Booth, "When Everyone Belongs, Everyone Learns: How Caring for Ourselves, Our Students and Our Colleagues Supports Student Learning and Professional Growth."

A specific focus has been on the families/caregivers of student groups targeted for gap closing via this plan specifically, parents of students with disabilities. This progress has been measured via the metrics identified in the SOA plan - ongoing review of parent surveys post IEP meetings, district-wide parent surveys and the upcoming TFM (First week in May 2023) monitoring interviews to be held with SEPAC members and leadership. Additionally, the District has completed a comprehensive Equity Audit led by an outside consultancy, PCG. The final report has been received and posted to the District website and parent coffees to discuss the results have been publicized to the community. Additionally, an executive summary of the equity audit was presented in the February School Committee meeting to the public and is available for convenient

viewing on the Westwood Community cable channel. The WPS school committee continues to publicly review SOA progress data (March 2023 meeting) and host open Office Hours both during the day and in the evening to invite additional parent input and engagement in a less formal setting than a public comment period at a school committee meeting. WPS also created a new full time Central Office administrative position, the Director of Equity, Integration and Community Partnerships to coordinate the ongoing work of the District related to Equity. Finally, WPS continues to prioritize the hiring of staff with diverse backgrounds that reflect the cultures in the community. Progress has been made on this metric across all job groups and ongoing efforts (ex. Joining the MPDE hiring consortium, PD for hiring managers) has been completed this school year.

Section 6: Update on stakeholder engagement in plan development and implementation

WPS has taken a multi-pronged approach to sharing data about student performance with stakeholders and utilizing that feedback into plan development and ongoing implementation.

WPS is sharing updates on plan implementation and early evidence of gap closing outcomes with different stakeholder groups via presentations to the Westwood School Committee (November 2023 meeting) on MCAS data, participation in a comprehensive District - wide Equity Audit and public sharing of the outcome data with the School Committee, SEPAC, PTO's, and key district and community stakeholders.

The District has sought and received substantive input and feedback from different stakeholder groups since the FY 22 SOA Amendment was submitted. That input has affected WPS's plan implementation by reinforcing and reaffirming the community's interest in academic excellence for all students, attention to the needs of student mental health and wellness as well as the ongoing commitment from parents and community members to equitable outcomes for all students.

The district has sought specific feedback from stakeholders representing student groups targeted for gap closing in this case parents of students with disabilities. In collaboration with the Westwood Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) the district created a parent survey that was sent to all parents of students with disabilities via the SEPAC network to seek input on Parent/Caregiver's experience of their children's math instruction and outcomes.

Finally, the WPS conducts a thorough and transparent budget development process with multiple budget presentations, multiple opportunities for public input, and full access to all budget documents and materials.