

LAWRENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS Student Opportunity Act Plan 2024 – 2026

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Interim Superintendent

April 1, 2024

Section 1 - District Plan

The Lawrence Public Schools (LPS) Student Opportunity Act Plan is focused on four commitment areas aimed at addressing disparities and accelerating student success, in particular our English learners and students with disabilities. The Student Opportunity Act offers LPS the chance to invest in evidence-based programs to close opportunity and achievement gaps among our student subgroups most in need of this support by:

- 1. **Building, enhancing, and coordinating structures for multi-tiered system of supports:** LPS will strengthen its commitment to supporting holistic student needs by increasing access to counselors across district schools, creating partnerships for student mental health and behavioral needs, building the capacity of staff in implementing restorative justice practices, providing support and interventions, increasing access to enrichment opportunities, and strengthening family partnerships.
- 2. **Aligning curriculum and instruction in schools, particularly at the middle school level:** LPS will invest in high-quality instructional materials, expanding our strategic literacy plan, and offering robust professional development both internally and through partnerships.
- 3. **Refining collaborative teaching practices for better impact:** LPS will increase the number of special education and English as Second Language (ESL) co-teachers, as well as offer robust professional development opportunities with experts in the field of co-teaching and building inclusive classroom practices.
- 4. **Hiring, retaining, cultivating, and sustaining highly qualified and diverse staff**: LPS will expand existing programs and create new pathways and supports to cultivate our own educators through robust professional development, coaching, leadership pathways, mitigating the financial barriers to entering the education profession, , and partnerships with institutions of higher education to grow a diverse, culturally responsive, and well-prepared educator workforce.

LPS is committed to developing or enhancing the following evidence-based programs to address disparities and accelerate the improvement of our students, in particular our English learners and students with disabilities.

- Integrated Services for Student Wellbeing
- Enhanced Support for Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health
- Positive School Environments
- Effective Student Support System
- Comprehensive Tiered Supports
- Students and Families as Valued Partners
- Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process
- Supporting Curriculum Implementation
- Comprehensive Approach to Early Literacy
- Effective Use of WIDA Framework
- High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities
- Collaborative Teaching Models
- Targeted Academic Support and Acceleration
- Authentic Postsecondary Planning
- High-Quality Secondary Pathways and Programs
- Extended Learning Time
- Effective Programming for Multilingual Learners
- Diverse Enrichment Opportunities

- Enhanced Pathways to Increase Educator Diversity
- Educator Preparation Partnerships
- Inclusive School Communities
- Retention Support Programs

In total, Lawrence will invest \$149.1M distributed as follows: \$46.1M for initiatives towards strategic objective 1-cultivating systems to support the whole student; \$79.2M for initiatives towards strategic objective 2- promoting deeper learning; and \$23.8M for initiatives towards strategic objective 3-developing and sustaining a workforce that is diverse, culturally responsive, well-prepared, and committed to continuous improvement.

Section 2 - Data Analysis

LPS serves almost 14,00 students PK-12. Our student population is 94% Hispanic or Latino, 3% White, 1% Black, and 1% Asian. Nearly all of our students are members of one or more high needs student groups, including economically disadvantaged (85.5%), first language not English (72.6%), English learners (42%), and students with disabilities (19%). Please see tables below for specific data as it relates to the achievement of Students with Disabilities (SWD), Non-Disabled Students (ND), English Learners (EL) and Non-English Learners (Non-EL).

							EL	A MCAS	% of S	tudent	s Mee	ting or	Excee	ding Expe	ectatio	ns				
	2019						2022								202	3	Gap Analysis 2019-2023			
	swd	Non-S WD	Gap	EL	Non- EL	Gap	SWD	Non-S WD	Gap	EL	Non- EL	Gap	SWD	Non-S WD	Gap	EL	Non- EL	Gap	SWD	EL
Grade 3	12	41	29	21	43	22	1	22	21	7	26	19	2	22	20	7	27	20	-9	-2
Grade 4	5	34	29	10	38	28	1	14	13	1	18	17	2	18	16	4	23	19	-13	-9
Grade 5	5	36	31	3	41	38	1	19	18	2	23	21	2	19	17	2	22	20	-14	-18
Grade 6	6	41	35	3	44	41	3	20	17	1	22	21	1	23	22	2	25	23	-13	-18
Grade 7	7	35	28	6	36	30	2	26	24	0	31	31	1	24	23	2	26	24	-5	-6
Grade 8	3	32	29	2	37	35	3	28	25	1	33	32	2	29	27	2	34	32	-2	-3
Grade 10	7	36	29	1	44	43	3	27	24	1	34	33	2	24	22	2	32	30	-7	-13
Grades 3-8	6	36	30	8	40	32	2	22	20	3	25	22	2	23	21	3	26	23	-9	-9

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	2019							2022							202		Gap Analysis 2019-2023			
	swd	Non-S WD	Gap	EL	Non- EL	Gap	SWD	Non-S WD	Gap	EL	Non- EL	Gap	SWD	Non-S WD	Gap	EL	Non- EL	Gap	SWD	EL
Grade 3	11	33	22	19	34	15	5	19	14	9	21	12	5	25	20	13	27	14	-2	-1
Grade 4	9	37	28	16	38	22	3	19	16	4	22	18	5	19	14	6	24	18	-14	-4
Grade 5	4	29	25	5	33	28	0	14	14	2	16	14	2	19	17	2	22	20	-8	-8
Grade 6	9	41	32	7	43	36	1	21	20	2	22	20	1	18	17	1	20	19	-15	-17

Grade 7	11	42	31	11	44	33	5	22	17	3	26	23	2	23	21	3	25	22	-10	-11
Grade 8	5	40	35	7	45	38	2	24	22	5	26	21	2	22	20	2	25	23	-15	-15
Grade 10	9	36	27	5	43	38	4	22	18	1	27	26	1	18	17	2	23	21	-10	-17
Grades 3-8	8	37	29	11	40	29	3	20	17	4	22	18	3	21	18	5	24	19	-11	-10

Examining progress on core MCAS achievement and growth metrics over the last three years (with the exception of 2020, when MCAS was not administered due to COVID-19 closures, and 2021, when the test was partial and administered remotely), we discern that in both ELA and math, at every grade level, the gap in the percent of students scoring Meeting Expectations or better between both the SWD and the Non-SWD subgroups, and the EL and Non-EL subgroups, decreased from 2019 to 2023. Despite this positive change, gaps continue to exist.

Digging deeper into the data, we note several trends in student performance across grade levels. Although the gap between SWD and Non-SWD remains stable from elementary to high school, the gap between EL and Non-EL significantly widens in the higher grade levels. In general, we see the narrowest gaps in elementary grades. We attribute this improvement in grades 3 and 4 to the enactment of our district's strategic literacy plan and the implementation of high quality instructional materials in our elementary schools, both of which were priorities in our first SOA plan.

Among our English learners, we noticed a steady increase in the percentage of elementary students making progress on ACCESS before COVID. After seeing a significant dip during the pandemic years, our elementary schools are returning to pre-pandemic levels and for the most part reaching the state average. Our students at the middle and high school level are struggling to return to 2019 levels, as well as meet the state averages.

A noteworthy trend in high school includes a significant increase in the number of students graduating, in particular English learners. Please see table below for specific graduation rates 2019-2021.

5 yr Graduation Rate	2019	2020	2021
All Students	75.3%	79.1%	85.9%
EL	60.6%	71.9%	82.9%
SWD	57.4%	61.8%	68.5%

In reviewing engagement and attendance data, we notice a large increase in chronic absenteeism rates in 2022 (COVID), which is starting to subside. Although our English learners are not chronically absent more often than the general student population, our students with disabilities do struggle with attendance at higher rates. Please see table below for specific chronic absenteeism rates 2020-2023.

Chronic Absenteeism Rate	2020	2021	2022	2023
All Students	19.6%	17.2%	43.5%	32.9%
EL	20.6%	18.5%	43.5%	33.4%

SWD	26.6%	24.8%	52%	42%

It is important to reflect on what has worked well. Our commitment to collaborative teaching practices, the implementation of high quality curricula for language arts and mathematics, and the launch of the district's strategic literacy plans have yielded positive results and contributed to the reduction of the gaps.

Based on this data, LPS needs to work in multiple ways to effectively address the needs of all our students and close achievement gaps. In summary, our analysis has revealed four critical areas requiring attention:

- Building, enhancing, and coordinating structures for multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)
- Curricular and instructional alignment in schools, particularly at the middle school level.
- Refinement of collaborative teaching practices for better impact.
- Hiring and retention of highly qualified, diverse staff.

LPS recognizes that the disparities that exist in our district are complex and require a coordinated and multifaceted approach. We are committed to data-driven decision making and addressing the above mentioned areas. Below is a summary of how we plan to approach these areas of concern, in particular considering our English learners and students with disabilities:

- Building, enhancing, and coordinating structures for multi-tiered system of supports: LPS will strengthen its
 commitment to supporting holistic student needs by increasing access to counselors across district schools,
 creating partnerships for student mental health and behavioral needs, building the capacity of staff in
 implementing restorative justice practices, providing support and interventions, increasing access to enrichment
 opportunities, and strengthening family partnerships.
- Aligning curriculum and instruction in schools, particularly at the middle school level: LPS will invest in high-quality instructional materials, expanding our strategic literacy plan, and offering robust professional development both internally and through partnerships.
- Refining collaborative teaching practices for better impact: LPS will increase the number of special education
 and English as Second Language (ESL) co-teachers, as well as offer robust professional development
 opportunities with experts in the field of co-teaching and building inclusive classroom practices.
- Hiring, retaining, cultivating, and sustaining highly qualified and diverse staff: LPS will expand existing programs
 and create new pathways and supports to cultivate our own educators through robust professional
 development, coaching, leadership pathways, mitigating the financial barriers to entering the education
 profession, , and partnerships with institutions of higher education to grow a diverse, culturally responsive, and
 well-prepared educator workforce.

Section 3 - Three Year Targets for Student Achievement

Lawrence Public Schools commits to adopting the three-year improvement targets established by DESE for the "Lowest Performing Students" group as our district's SOA plan improvement targets.

Section 4 - Community & Family Engagement

LPS strives to create and sustain meaningful engagement with families and caregivers in our community. We recognize that family partnerships are critical to ensuring successful outcomes for all of our students. We have implemented several strategies to meaningfully engage families over the past few years, including:

- Family Resource Center The FRC supports families, students, schools and the community with a myriad of programs and services that expand and deepen high-quality partnerships in service of student success. These services include continuous collaboration with schools and parents on behalf of the student's academic and social-emotional learning success. FRC's primary goal is to provide proactive initiatives that aid school readiness, parent partnerships, and family economic success, providing the tools of community resources, educational stability, and more. The department also deploys liaisons to help foster school events and effective home-school partnerships.
- Family and Student Engagement Policies Launched in 2019, these policies support meaningful, two-way
 engagement, partnership and shared decision making with both students and families. Our policies outline
 necessary practices and ensure their sustainability.
- **LPS Engagement Tool Box** Best practices, sample scripts, and videos to support schools in their efforts to carry out guidance outlined in the new engagement policies.
- Lawrence Family Institute for Student Success (LFISS) The Lawrence Family Institute for Student Success is a series of nine facilitated meetings led by program Coordinator and facilitators trained in the institute philosophy and approach. Each class meeting is supported with lessons designed to be responsive to the issues that parents bring to the table. The institute is tailored to address the needs of early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school families.
- Lawrence Working Families Initiative(LWFI) -The Lawrence Working Families Initiative (LWFI) is a groundbreaking effort to link the families of LPS students with the resources they need to access employment and advance economically in order to thrive and to support their children's academic achievement. LWFI is based on the premise that a successful turnaround of Lawrence schools is a whole community and whole family effort, and that children thrive when their families are stable. LWFI is a collaborative effort of the Lawrence Public Schools, Lawrence Community Works and other community partners. A staple of LWFI is the Parent to Paraprofessional program, which provides LPS families with the training, coaching, support, and field-based experience needed to become a paraprofessional.
- LPS Parent Liaison Professional Learning Community (PLC) -: A professional learning community of LPS Parent Liaisons, Family Engagement Liaisons, and staff in similar positions. Regular meetings with support from the FRC staff and guest speakers that are designed to build a peer network of support and to learn about promising practices in family engagement.
- Play to Learn Play to Learn is a series of Pre-K and Kindergarten family EL/Math workshops designed to raise
 awareness about the power of play in the learning process, share information about learning standards, and
 explore activities families can do at home to support learning.
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) & English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) The
 leading parent voice groups on issues specific to students with disabilities (SEPAC) and English learners (ELPAC).
 Led by district families, meetings encourage space for meaningful conversations about meeting student needs,
 developing opportunities, and tackling district or school-based challenges, while offering support for families.
- **Tu Voz Council:** Parent and student members work alongside educators, school leaders and district administrators to problem solve and build meaningful engagement in service of our students.

- **Superintendent Virtual Coffee Hours:** Regular series of virtual coffee hours for LPS families are scheduled. These series consist of grade levels specific to families. The topics of these sessions have been on subjects such as updating families on students' academic progress, the school district budgetary process, health information for families, and any district-wide updates.

We measure the success of these strategies in the following ways:

- School-based liaisons (SBLs) contact, conference, and conduct family visits (virtual or in person) to build effective school-family partnerships that serve student/family success and holistic development.
- Create and administer a Google survey for families three times yearly (September, January, and June) to assess the SBL's effectiveness and challenges.
- Monitor attendance counts of family school events through QR code attendance tracker, sign-in attendance, master Google drive data track of families, etc.

To develop our three-year SOA plan, LPS engaged in a two-pronged approach to involve families, students, educators, administrators, community partners, and the school community at large. We gathered input on new areas to support with our next round of SOA funding through a *community-wide survey* and *focus group discussions*.

1. Community-wide survey: The community survey was available in English and Spanish and was shared widely via text, email, and social media. The purpose of the 5-question survey was to gather input on new evidence-based programs to add to our existing commitments and expansion of co-teaching, social-emotional learning, and high-quality curriculum and instruction. The survey remained open through a two week window in February 2024 and gathered a total of 1229 responses (414 of which were submitted in Spanish). Close to 50% of respondents shared ideas in the open-ended question asking participants how they would like to see SOA funds spent by the district to improve the future of LPS. 46% of survey participants identified as a parent/caregiver and 32% identified as a teacher. The survey also gathered optional demographic information. 60% of participants who opted in to share race and ethnicity information self-identified as Latinx followed by 37% who self-identified as White.

The top five programs participants want to see started or expanded at LPS are: 1) social services to support students' social *emotional and physical health*; 2) additional after-school *enrichment opportunities* to engage in arts, electives, athletics, and world languages; 3) additional *academic support programs*; 4) Increase support and *programming for multilingual learners*; and 5) increase student's *college and career readiness opportunities*. Although the top three programs varied slightly in ranking by participant group, the top three programs participants identified as most important to implement remained the same.

- 2. <u>Focus group discussions</u>: During the month of February, we facilitated conversations with family groups including the ELPAC board and student groups representing newcomer and multilingual experiences. The focus group discussions allowed us to dig deeper into what the Student Opportunity Act is, share how SOA funds were invested in the first round, and have conversations about priorities for the next round of funding. In particular, conversations with families highlighted the need to keep channels of communication and feedback open through the monitoring process. The focus group conversation findings are summarized below:
 - Students highlighted the need for more choices, programs, guidance, mentoring and career exploration opportunities, especially for multilingual students.

- Students also underscored the importance of better pay and access to high-quality instructional materials for teachers.
- Families highlighted the need for more open channels of communication between district and families about what evidence-based strategies are positively impacting our students and the need for more capacity building and professional development opportunities for families so they can better partner with educators and advocate for their students. Families also pointed out the need to continue seeing bilingualism as an asset and to build programs and approaches that carry out that value. Families that both represent the experience of having a multilingual learner and an IEP shared the desire to see more direct student services and support.

We will continue engaging and collaborating with the ELPAC, SEPAC, and/or other family groups throughout the implementation of the plan.

Section 5 - Evidence-Based Programs

Focus Area 1.1 Promote students' physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces

EBP 1.1A: Integrated Services for Student Wellbeing

Description: Our district will continue to support holistic student needs. Six counselors, 15 BCBAs and 7 nurses were hired with ESSER to support student physical and mental health. These positions will be maintained with SOA funds. In addition, we plan to increase the number of FTEs across the district as follows: 34 school adjustment counselors, 4 BCBAs. This will allow LPS to stay within MASCA's recommended counselor-student ratio. LPS will also hire an additional counselor as well as a teacher to support the BRYT program at the high school in order to re-engage students returning from a prolonged absence due to mental health or medical reasons.

Schools impacted: All schools, Lawrence High School (Bryt Program)

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$17,660,040

• Benefits and Fixed Charges: \$3,425,040

• Guidance and Psychological: \$14,235,000

Budget foundation categories: Benefits and Fixed Charges, Guidance and Psychological

Monitoring metrics:

• Decreased student to counselor ratio

• Increased in re-engagement rates of high school students with prolonged absences

EBP 1.1B: Enhanced Support for SEL and Mental Health

Description: Our district will continue to support the mental and behavioral health needs of students across the district. Lawrence will continue to use a Student Screener to assess students well-being to determine tiered levels of support. Lawrence will begin a partnership with Cartwheel to assist with Tier 2 and Tier 3 mental health needs at the middle and high school level. Lawrence will continue to expand professional learning opportunities specific to mental health and behavioral health needs of students and incorporate the use of SEL curriculum across the tiered levels of support.

Schools impacted: All Schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$1,975,500

• Guidance and Psychological: \$165,000

• Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.: \$497,001

• Professional Development: \$319,500

Budget foundation categories: Guidance & Psychological, Instructional Materials, Equip, Tech., Professional Development

Monitoring metrics:

• Change in social and emotional competency rates as measured by local screener

EBP 1.1C Positive School Environments

Description: The district has been working over the last few years towards implementing more restorative practices at all grade levels. We will continue our partnership with Suffolk University for their Restorative Justice Tiered Training and individualized school coaching, as well as our partnership with Lesley University for professional development on Culturally Responsive and Trauma Informed Practices. By June 2027, we expect 150 staff to participate across the tiered restorative practices training & 20 staff to be enrolled in Lesley Institute for Trauma Sensitivity Program.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$390,000

• Professional Development: \$390,000

Budget foundation categories: Professional Development

Monitoring metrics:

• Increase in the use of restorative practices at all grade levels

→ Focus Area 1.2 Implement an MTSS that helps all students progress both academically and in their social, emotional, and behavioral development.

EBP 1.2A Effective Student Support System

Description: Over the past few years, Lawrence has committed to improving academic systems of support for students by expanding intervention and blended learning support through adaptive, computer-based platforms such as Lexia Learning, IXL Learning, iReady, and Imagine Learning. These platforms provide students with "just in time" support to accelerate learning. The district will continue to provide 1:1 devices to support communication for students with disabilities, and Frontline to manage IEPs. In addition to these supports, the district will expand our partnership with the School Empowerment Network to provide job embedded coaching on restorative practices to educators to support students' social, emotional, and behavioral development. Lawrence will continue and expand the work of the Behavior Intervention & Support Team, formerly the Student Support and Stabilization Team. This team is composed of School Adjustment Counselors, Behavior Coaches and Behavior Specialists to help model and support schools with interventions to support students well-being. Lawrence will also expand upon its successful launch of recent inclusion initiatives by expanding our Inclusive Education Team including a team of Inclusion Coaches (Instruction), Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Behavior Specialists, paraprofessionals and related service providers. The incorporation of capacity building staff training and growth of both of these teams will help students progress both academically and in areas of social, emotional and behavioral development.

Schools impacted: All schools in the district

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$15,859,800

• Benefits and Fixed Charges: \$964,800

Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$1,560,000

Instruction Leadership: \$2,340,000

• Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.: \$9,900,000

Professional Development: \$1,095,000

Budget foundation categories: Benefits and Fixed Charges, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Instruction Leadership, Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech., Professional Development

Monitoring metrics:

- Increase in % of students meeting of exceeding on Math, ELA, and Science MCAS
- Increase in social and emotional competency rates

EBP 1.2B Comprehensive Tiered Supports

Description: Lawrence will continue to build upon comprehensive tiered supports across all grade levels in the district. The district will also purchase materials to support students' executive functioning skills. In addition, we will partner with agencies to provide training in areas of practical functional skills based treatment and collaborative problem solving. Addition of these supports will provide tiered supports, materials and training across academic and social emotional content areas.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$1,641,000

- Professional Development: \$1,281,000
- Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.: \$360,000

Budget foundation categories: Professional Development, Instructional Materials, Equip., Tech.

Monitoring metrics:

- Increase in social and emotional competency rates
- Increase in practical functional skills

→ Focus Area 1.3 Develop authentic partnerships with students and families that elevate their voices and leadership in decision-making and connect them to their communities.

EBP 1.3B Students and Families as Valued Partners

Description: The ongoing mission at LPS's Family Resource Center is to assist families in various capacities, given our district's increasing number of newcomer families and homeless students. In collaboration with the Educational Stability Specialist, we will hire liaisons to identify and assist students and families facing homelessness or housing instability, linking them with pertinent city and state resources. Furthermore, we plan to introduce a Parent Academy, guided by a dedicated staff member who will organize professional development sessions and informational meetings for families, particularly students with special education needs or multilingual backgrounds. At the school level, we aim to maintain the Family Engagement Specialists hired under ESSER and to provide stipends to Family Engagement Facilitators who engage families and students in collaborative activities during after-school hours. This engagement will encompass home visits, school-wide, and community events, mentoring programs, student council involvement, and participation in the PTO and Family Literacy initiatives. We look to continue to partner with Great Schools Partnerships and other partners to design and deliver foundational training for any interested school staff around family engagement, restorative practices, educational equity, and anti-bias training, ranging from foundational to advanced level training dependent on school needs. Lastly, the Family Resource Center is planning on creating a more robust translation and interpretation policy, to ensure equity in access to professional translation services. To this end, we will contract Baystate Interpreters and hire an interpretation manager and two full time Spanish interpreters.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$8,587,680

• Professional Development: \$555,000

• Benefits and Fixed Charges: \$1,543,680

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$249,000

• Pupil Services: \$6,240,000

Budget foundation categories: Professional Development, Benefits and Fixed Charges, Classroom & Specialist Teachers,

Pupil Services

Monitoring metrics:

- Increased number of students and families connected to city and state resources
- Increased rates of family involvement
- Increased use of higher quality translations

→ Focus Area 2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning

EBP 2.1A Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process

Description: The district has worked to ensure that all students have access to high quality curricular materials. Over the past three years, all schools have made progress to ensure that students have vetted materials in ELA and Math. The district will continue to purchase Amplify Curriculum, Intervention Materials, and Assessments (CKLA, DIBELS, MCASS).

Schools impacted: All elementary schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$2,100,000

• Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.: \$2,100,000

Budget foundation categories: Instructional Materials, Equip., Tech.

Monitoring metrics:

Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on ELA and Math MCAS

EBP 2.1B Supporting Curriculum Implementation

Description: The district recognizes that it is critical to support teachers in standards-aligned practices to effectively implement high quality curriculum. One of our strongest professional development experiences for teachers is participation in UnboundEd's Standards Institute, which immerses educators in a week-long study of their content standards and how they are applied in the classroom. The district plans to send approximately 75 teachers and leaders to Standards Institute in Summer 2024. To support deeper learning throughout the year, LPS will continue to work with The Achievement Network to provide school-based coaching on the instructional core, as well as a districtwide customized professional learning series to improve pedagogy and assessment practices around high quality curricular materials.

Students with disabilities have specific curricular needs. In order to ensure successful implementation of evidence-based, standards aligned, adapted core curriculum, LPS's Inclusive Education Team, comprised of Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Instructional Coaches, Behavior Specialists and Paraprofessionals, led by the Director of Inclusion with consultation from experts in the field of Inclusive Practice, strive to promote an inclusive educational experience for all by focusing on equity through the implementation of standards aligned curriculum resources for students accessing specialized program services. TeachTown, the selected standards aligned, adapted core curriculum in use, previously funded through ESSER, may be used as an additional curricular resource for students with disabilities accessing portions of their school day within the general education setting as well as the primary curriculum for students accessing specialized program supports for a greater portion of their school day in an effort to build foundational learning/readiness skills. LPS' standards-aligned, adapted core curriculum based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (TeachTown) is currently instituted in the majority of our K-8 specialized program classrooms. In the 24-25 SY, the district plans to expand our use of TeachTown Curriculum in an effort to reach our high school and transitioning to adulthood students accessing specialized program services.

LPS has been preparing and planning for the opening of a dual language (DL) (Spanish/English) program in the district using funds from DESE's FC181 (English Learner Education Support), which will expire in June 2024. The program will open in the fall of 2024 at Arlington Elementary School with 2 Kindergarten classes, and it will expand by two classes each year (two Kinders and two first grade classes in SY26, two Kinders, two first grades, and two second grades in SY27, etc). To support the success of this new program at LPS, we will purchase literacy screeners and assessments in Spanish in order to identify the linguistic assets that the students bring into the program, as well as to monitor their progress in the acquisition of Spanish. Implementation of these assessments will require training and data analysis efforts as well. We will also purchase a curriculum that supports bilingualism and biliteracy across content areas. Although materials for the first year of the program have already been selected (American Reading Company, CK Science en español, Nvisions en español), there will need to be extensive implementation efforts. We are planning on providing teacher leaders in the DL program with stipends to carry out the implementation work. Over the next 4 years, Arlington Elementary will need to select and implement materials for grades 1-4. Lastly, over the next three years, we want to contract with the Multistate Association for Bilingual Education (MABE) for technical assistance and professional development.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$5,656,200

Instruction Leadership: \$975,000

Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$45,000

• Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.: \$840,000

Professional Development: \$3,555,000Benefits & Fixed Charges: \$241,200

Budget foundation categories: Instruction Leadership, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech., Professional Development, Benefits & Fixed Charges.

Monitoring metrics:

• Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on MCAS

EBP 2.1C Comprehensive Approach to Early Literacy

Description: In the coming year, LPS will continue to prioritize evidence-based early literacy through the enactment of our Strategic Literacy Plan. To date, LPS has partnered with the HILL for Literacy to offer the Science of Reading Series (10 modules, 2.5 hours each) to all Pre-Kindergarten to grade five instructional staff, with 199 teachers participating during the 2023-2024 school year (98 primary and 101 intermediate), expanded job-embedded coaching for all participating educators in the district's PK-5 schools, created a district wide literacy assessment framework, and piloted targeted literacy data meetings with 2 district schools. In SY24-25, the district will expand this partnership with HILL for Literacy to offer Adolescent Literacy Modules and coaching to grades 6-8 staff.

Schools impacted: all elementary, 8 middle schools. Anticipated allocation over three years: \$2,407,500

• Professional Development: \$2,407,500

Budget foundation categories: Professional Development

Monitoring metrics:

Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on ELA MCAS

→ Focus Area 2.2 Use the MTSS process to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students, particular students with disabilities and multilingual learners, equitable access to deeper learning.

EBP 2.2A Effective Use of WIDA Framework

Description: The English Learner (EL)population in Lawrence continues to grow, with more students identified as EL being new to the country. As we strive to close the gap between ELs and general ed students, we plan on improving the quality and amount of professional development opportunities provided by the district to all staff, including classroom teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals. Although we currently already partner with organizations like MATSOL, ICMEE, and WestEd to provide opportunities, we would like to increase visibility and expand access by promoting these opportunities and compensating participants for their time outside of contract hours. In addition, LPS is planning on strengthening professional development for Visual & Performing Arts when it comes to teaching English learners, as these classes are often the first space where students can lower the affective filter and accelerate their English language acquisition in a safe, low stakes environment.

Additionally, LPS plans to afford external opportunities to visual and performing arts staff to help to improve visual literacy in the classroom and increase student discourse. Some of these conferences include, but are not limited to, the Massachusetts Music Educator Association MMEA) conference, the National Art Education Association (NAEA)conference, National Dance Education Organization (NDEO), and Broadway Teachers Workshop. We would like to double the number of participating staff members afforded the opportunity to attend the conferences.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$1,200,000

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$900,000

Professional Development: \$300,000

Budget foundation categories: Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Professional Development,

Monitoring metrics:

• Increase in % of ELs making progress on the ACCESS for ELs exam

EBP 2.2B High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

Description: LPS has developed valuable and collaborative relationships with consultants who are experts in the field of executive functioning, Universal Design for Learning, co-teaching, inclusive practice, assistive technologies, and IEP development to deliver professional development series and coaching for identified staff. We have also emphasized the importance of social-emotional health and behavioral supports through the district. Professional development opportunities for our staff around SEL, restorative practices, trauma-informed instruction, creating equitable and respectful learning environments, and and the overall implementation of MTSS practices along with other short and long term student goal setting allow us to better capture student voice and provide scaffolds as a temporary support until each student makes the gains they need. In addition to access to high-quality professional development, each school has school-based educator representatives familiar with the Data Wise system, allowing teams to track data, evaluate that data and then make data driven decisions and changes. Implementation of a standards-based curriculum is the norm across all grade levels and student sub groups. While 1.45% of our students remain on an MCAS Alt Assessment, all others, even those receiving specialized services, are part of an MCAS diploma bound pathway. We have also increased family engagement and collaboration through the first annual Office of Student Support Services (OSSS) open house, OSSS monthly newsletters, family listening sessions and attendance at SEPAC meetings. During the next three years we plan to grow several of our initiatives through professional development offerings, coaching sessions and targeted walk throughs/individual sessions. We also intend to add a language-based specialized instruction educator to strengthen our service delivery to our students with specific learning disabilities.

Our data shows that English learners with a disability are most likely to miss their ACCESS for ELLs progress targets and become long term ELs. Although co-teaching and collaborative practices have brought these students to the center, more professional development is needed to meet their needs. We plan on contracting with providers like ICMEE and MATSOL to provide PD for teachers and coaches on pedagogy and instruction for ELs with disabilities. Because PD time is so limited during the school day, we will offer stipends for those attending outside contract hours.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$3,843,000

• Professional Development: \$2,925,000

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$918,000

Budget foundation categories: Professional Development, Classroom & Specialist Teachers

Monitoring metrics:

• Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on MCAS

EBP 2.2C Collaborative Teaching Models

Description: Through a residency partnership with Dr. Marilyn Friend, LPS launched a very successful co-teaching pilot in four schools during 2019-20. Over the last four years, LPS has added approximately 30 dedicated Special Education Teachers and 18 licensed English as a Second Language Teachers. Co-teaching, a service delivery mechanism, occurs primarily in a shared classroom or workspace in which both co-teachers share instructional responsibility and accountability for a single group of students. Over the next three years, we plan on expanding the program by adding 15 dedicated Special Education Teachers and 12 licensed English as a Second Language Teachers. To increase the effectiveness of both the specialist and the content teachers, we will also partner with Dr. Andrea Honigsfeld and Tammy Barron to provide professional development on collaborative practices for the success of all students.

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$35,667,120

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$26,910,000

• Professional Development: \$1,200,000

• Instructional Materials, Equip., Tech.: \$900,000

• Benefits and Fixed Charges: \$6,657,120

Budget foundation categories: Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Professional Development, Instructional Materials,

Equip., Tech., Benefits and Fixed Charges

Monitoring metrics:

Schools impacted: All schools

- Decreased segregation for SPED and EL service delivery
- Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on MCAS
- Increase in % of ELs making progress on the ACCESS for ELs exam

EBP 2.2D Targeted Academic Support and Acceleration

Description: The district currently provides robust opportunities for student acceleration during the school year and the summer. Lawrence will continue to offer Acceleration Academies during school vacation weeks. Acceleration Academies are week-long academic programs designed to accelerate student learning through engaging, standards-aligned lessons. Instruction is provided in person and lessons are tailored to the specific needs of students and should involve engaging, hands-on learning experiences. Students are invited to participate in an Academy based on specific metrics. During the coming school year we plan to serve approximately 1,400 students in February and 1,400 students in April. The district will continue to provide stipends for teachers and facilitators of this program as well as supplies.

In addition to vacation-based programming, LPS looks to further support students throughout the school year. Given the district's 32.9% chronic absenteeism rate, we plan to support students in recovering credit and re-engaging in school through extensive academic support. The district plans to provide stipends to staff who provide accelerated programs outside of school time (during vacations and after school) to these students. The district also plans to maintain a cadre of districtwide tutors to support acceleration opportunities for students.

The high school, in collaboration with the district, provides opportunities during February and April school breaks for a subset of students to gain academic reinforcement. LHS aims to significantly expand, strengthen, and sustain this support via a comprehensive, year-long afterschool small-group academic reinforcement program targeting the needs of students as determined by NWEA MAP, MCAS, ACCESS, and mock Advanced Placement exams. In 6-week cycles, small groups of students will work with a licensed teacher in a content area on grade-level standards that align with the focus of the current course the student is taking, the requirements of high-stakes assessments, and are situated in the content areas of highest need. This program will serve 310 students at once and 1,240 students over the course of the year including Newcomers, SLIFE students, and students who are approaching grade level. Students will track their progress with the teacher against MCAS, ACCESS, or Advanced Placement benchmarks. The desired outcomes are improved performance on these measures. To support teachers and assess impact, Program Coordinators will recruit students, develop learning plans with teachers and students, observe instruction and provide feedback, and track

student growth. To support the coordinators, we will work with the Achievement Network (ANet) to implement a data-inquiry process to track performance and adjust instruction accordingly.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$11,935,320

• Benefits and Fixed Charges: \$1,061,280

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$6,044,040

• Instructional Materials, Equip., Tech.: \$90,000

• Other Teaching Services: \$4,740,000

Budget foundation categories: Benefits and Fixed Charges, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Instructional Materials,

Equip., Tech., Other Teaching Services

Monitoring metrics:

• Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on MCAS

• Increase in % of students passing high stakes tests such as AP exams, SATs, etc.

→ Focus Area 2.3 Reimagine the high school experience so that all students are engaged and prepared for post-secondary education.

EBP 2.3A Authentic Postsecondary Planning

Description: The high school will provide a comprehensive college and career planning experience to augment the counseling that all students receive annually. This will include half-days of experiential learning for Grades 9 and 10 that will introduce students to career fields through both on and off-campus events such as employer/career fairs, guest speakers, company visits, and more. Grade 9 and 10 students will also visit local colleges and participate in workshops to help them identify their interests and the steps necessary to achieve their goals. Students in Grades 11 and 12 will participate in job shadow, internship, and college/career-planning activities such as FAFSA workshops, college essay workshops, college fairs, and trade/career fairs. Funding will also support our Innovation Pathways students in undertaking college-level course work with local college partners and continue our desire to offer students a paid internship experience to reduce barriers to this key college/career readiness experience that many of our students miss on account of the need to work to provide resources for themselves and family members.

Coordinators to collaborate with multiple stakeholders and school partners in designing and implementing, in collaboration with school leaders, college and career planning activities within the school day, aligned to the DESE MyCAP framework. They will supervise the tracking of activities.

Financial support will also include stipends for students for school counselors to attend career-advising professional learning opportunities to enhance their ability to better understand local and regional economic opportunities and how to connect interested students with internships, apprenticeships, and more.

Schools impacted: Lawrence High School

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$1,731,720

Benefits & Fixed Charges: \$144,720
Guidance & Psychological: \$585,000
Instruction Leadership: \$927,000
Operations & Maintenance: \$75,000

Budget foundation categories: Benefits & Fixed Charges, Guidance & Psychological, Instruction Leadership, Operations

& Maintenance

Monitoring metrics:

- Increased in % of students participating in early college and work based learning opportunities
- Increased in % of students enrolling in a college or university after graduation
- Increase in % of students enrolled in advanced coursework

EBP 2.3B High-Quality Secondary Pathways and Programs

Description: Lawrence, similar to other districts in Massachusetts, continues to receive an increasing number of EL students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). In the past, they received intervention and support in one of our newcomer high school programs. However, as the numbers continue to go up, we find the need for additional support and programming to support SLIFE students in being prepared for college and/or career. We are planning on creating 2 FTEs to support development of a SLIFE pathway for students.

Schools impacted: Lawrence High School

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$501,480

• Benefits & Fixed Charges: \$96,480

• Classroom & Specialist Teacher: \$390,000

• Instruction Leadership: \$15,000

Budget foundation categories: Benefits & Fixed Charges, Classroom & Specialist Teacher, Instruction Leadership Monitoring metrics:

- Establishment of a clear pathway for SLIFE students
- Increase in graduation rate for SLIFE students
- Decrease in chronic absenteeism rates for SLIFE students

 \rightarrow Focus Area 2.4 Develop a coherent and holistic range of programming that is responsive to the needs and interests of diverse learners.

EBP 2.4B Extended Learning Time

Description: Based on the results from the SOA survey, the community and staff requested additional after school enrichment opportunities. We currently have 25 visual and performing arts after school programs throughout the district. In order to increase these offerings, we will need an after school and summer programming VPA enrichment facilitator, transportation to make the offerings more flexible and to afford opportunities for accelerated programming for secondary students, allocations for outside partners to provide enrichment and supplies to support programming. In partnership with the Visual Performing Arts program, the Office of Student Support Services will provide targeted after school programming for students who have significant disabilities. This programming will focus on visual and performing arts, yielding an opportunity for inclusion and exposure to typical developing peer groups.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$1,875,000

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$525,000

• Other Teaching Services: \$1,350,000

Budget foundation categories: Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Other Teaching Services

Monitoring metrics:

• Increase in % of students participating in enrichment opportunities

EBP 2.4C Effective Programming for Multilingual Learners

Description: To support the launch of the dual language program at Arlington Elementary School, we will hire additional staff over the next three years, including bilingual classroom teachers and bilingual special education teachers. We also plan on continuing to support educators at Arlington Elementary and throughout the district to obtain their bilingual education endorsement at no cost to them. Lastly, we will contract with leading experts in the field (MABE and other vendors) to provide professional development to the dual language teaching and administrative staff on pedagogy for bilingualism and biliteracy.

Schools impacted:

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$981,480

Benefits and Fixed Charges: \$96,480

- Classroom & Teacher Specialists: \$390,000
- Instructional Materials, Equip., Tech.: \$225,000
- Professional Development: \$270,000

Budget foundation categories: Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Professional Development, Benefits & Fixed Charges, Instructional Materials, Equip., Tech.

Monitoring metrics:

- Successful launch of Dual Language program
- Increase in % of students meeting literacy benchmarks in both languages

EBP 2.4D Diverse Enrichment Opportunities

Description: The district recognizes the need to implement a robust before and after school enrichment program. We are committed to honoring the community request and extending learning in the areas of arts, science, P.E. and world languages in grades 1-12 to promote the social and emotional growth of our students. Each school in the district will be allocated funds based on enrollment, so that they can create and organize their own programs based on student interest.

The largest school building in the district, and the one which offers most visual and performing arts opportunities is the Lawrence High School. The campus has been working on coherence and will be hiring a dean of curriculum and instruction (DCI) to be a through line and support all academies 9-12. The VPA DCI will assist with scheduling that helps determine a more definitive continuum for learning, curriculum adoption and implementation, support with evaluating and coaching all VPA, facilitate LHS VPA PD and support expansion of the arts pathway and senior portfolios development.

Schools impacted: All schools, LHS

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$11,320,680

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$5,824,200

Benefits & Fixed Charges: \$96,480

• Instructional Materials, Equip., Tech.: \$5,400,000

Budget foundation categories: Administration, Benefits & Fixed Charges

Monitoring metrics:

- Increase in % of students attending an enrichment opportunity outside school hours
- Increase coherence in visual and performing arts pathways

ightarrow Focus Area 3.1 Develop an increased and robust pipeline of diverse and well-prepared educators and leaders.

EBP 3.1B Enhanced Pathways to Increase Educator Diversity

Description: LPS will continue to build and retain a culturally responsive districtwide staff. LPS will utilize community outreach opportunities to attract individuals interested in joining the district. For those already within the district, we will provide robust support such as high quality professional learning, internship opportunities, and tuition reimbursement to promote our paraprofessionals. LPS staff pursuing targeted pathways will have access to renowned district consultants through professional development, coaching and seminars. Staff are also supported with licensure support, if needed, including free MTEL preparation programs. LPS' BIPOC educators are encouraged to participate in Lynch Leadersip Academy at Boston College, whose mission is to address inequities and to increase opportunities and outcomes for students. LPS has partnered with local higher education institutions including Regis College, Northern Essex Community College, Merrimack College and UMass Lowell to support paraprofessionals and educators pursuing higher education.

In addition, LPS is committed to co-planning and launching an innovative early college/education pathway with the purpose of providing opportunities for Lawrence High School students to cultivate an interest in education careers.

This unique pathway will include career exploration beginning in middle school, college credit accumulation, paid internships and field-based experiences, mentoring, and academic advising, and credentials.

To continue building a robust paraprofessional pathway, LPS will continue partnering with UMass Lowell to grow the current Grow-Your-Own educator pathway program open to Lawrence High students and paraprofessionals across the district who seek the Bachelor of Education degree which leads to a license in both Moderate Disabilities (K-8) and Elementary Education (1-6). Students and paraprofessionals in the program receive no-cost college courses, financial support for books and materials, coaching & academic support, and mentoring to navigate the administrative aspect of teacher licensure.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$936,480

Administration: \$390,000

• Benefits & Fixed Charges: \$96,480

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$300,000

• Other Teaching Services: \$150,000

Budget foundation categories: Administration, Benefits & Fixed Charges, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Other

Teaching Services

Monitoring metrics:

• Increased staff diversity, particularly within the teaching staff

Increase in % of highly qualified educators

EBP 3.1C Educator Preparation Partnerships

Description: Like many districts in the state, LPS is struggling to hire highly qualified classroom teachers in the area of English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Development (ELD), which is having a negative impact on the outcomes of our English learners. In an effort to better qualify the current staff and to attract potential candidates within the community, we are planning on establishing a partnership with Lesley University to offer up to 20 educators from Lawrence per year the possibility of completing a teacher preparation program for ESL, which leads to an initial ESL license. The coursework, which would be completed in one school year and provides half the necessary credits for a masters degree, would better position staff in teaching or paraprofessional roles to understand second language acquisition processes, linguistics, and culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogies. In year 1, the focus for participant recruitment will be current teaching staff who are unlicensed in ESL. In years 2 and 3, the focus will shift towards paraprofessionals who would like to become classroom teachers in the future, or content teachers who have an interest in better understanding the needs of English learners.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$450,000

• Other Teaching Services: \$450,000

Budget foundation categories: Other Teaching Services

Monitoring metrics:

• Increase in % of licensed and highly qualified ESL teachers

→ Focus Area 3.2 Create the conditions to sustain and retain diverse and effective staff, particularly those who entered the field through alternative pathways.

EBP 3.2A Inclusive School Communities

Description: Creating the conditions and environments where students, families, and educators feel a sense of belonging and where diversity and multilingualism are valued as assets requires a robust investment in understanding and implementing culturally and linguistically responsive practices and mindsets. LPS will invest in designing, rolling

out, and evaluating a series of professional development opportunities on culturally and linguistically responsive practices to build mindset, capacity, and knowledge. The series will include asset-based pedagogy, high-quality family engagement, student voice and agency as levers for change, restorative approaches to education, affirming LGBTQIA+ students, and multilingualism.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$1,725,000
Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$150,000
Professional Development: \$1,575,000

Budget foundation categories: Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Professional Development

- Monitoring metrics:

 Increase in % of students, families, and educators who report safe, inclusive, and welcoming school
 - environments as measured by local surveys
 - Increased student, family, educator voice and agency

EBP 3.2B Retention Support Programs

Description: LPS is committed to supporting teachers who are new to the profession or to our district. The district currently has a robust partnership with Impact Coaching Partners, who provide a variety of PD for new teachers. These offerings include professional development on classroom management and relationship building, school-based 1-1 biweekly, job-embedded coaching with new teachers, and professional development for school leaders on developing a comprehensive coaching program that supports all teachers, regardless of their level of experience.

Research about hiring and retaining BIPOC educators identifies a variety of barriers for racially and ethnically diverse educators as they complete education preparation programs and as they pursue licensure and required certifications. LPS is committed to mitigating the financial barriers associated with pursuing a career in education specially for BIPOC educators. Through the newly created Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Department, LPS will grow existing programs and supports to provide tuition assistance and reimbursements of cost associated with taking mandatory exams including MTELs and ParaPro tests. In addition, we will grow the number of no-cost preparation courses with proven partners for educators to successfully pass required tests- with targeted recruitment of educators with current emergency licenses.

Recognizing the critical need to focus on retention of BIPOC educators, the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Department we will add a full-time position to coordinate programs, services, and strategies related to educator retention and creating the conditions in schools for educators to thrive. This newly created role will co-plan and launch additional retention supports to ensure Lawrence educators are retained and sustained.

LPS acknowledges that competitive compensation is perhaps the single most important tool for attracting and retaining high quality staff in every area. In February 2024, LPS began the process of implementing districtwide market-based salary adjustments. These adjustments included updates to all existing union contracts, and retroactive payments dating to the start of SY 2023-24.

Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$18,180,000

- Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$16,080,000
- Professional Development: \$2,100,000

Budget foundation categories: Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Professional Development Monitoring metrics:

- Improvement in BIPOC educator retention
- Increase in rate of educators converting emergency licensure to initial as measured by local data

EBP 3.2C Pathways for Professional Growth and Leadership

Description: To sustain and grow aspiring educational leaders, LPS will invest in growing and/or starting a number of partnerships with higher education institutions and non-profit partners.

In collaboration with Umass Lowell, we will launch the Education Administration Lawrence Cohort to provide a no-cost M.Ed. in Education Administration to aspiring LPS leaders. The program provides future leaders with the knowledge and skills needed for roles as school principals and administrators.

To increase the number of BIPOC counselors and school nurses, LPS will invest in two unique partnerships (final partners to be determined) to provide no-cost tuition to a cohort of 10 future counselors and 5 nurses.

In partnership with Latinos for Education, we will sustain participation in both the Aspiring Leaders Fellowship and the Latinx Teacher Fellowship- both opportunities focus on accelerating the careers of emerging Latino education leaders. Schools impacted: All schools

Anticipated allocation over three years: \$2,475,000

• Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$1,425,000

• Professional Development: \$1,050,000

Budget foundation categories: Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Professional Development

Monitoring metrics:

• Increase in retention of effective educators and leaders