



Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School

10 New Bond Street Worcester, MA 01606

Phone: (508) 854-8400 Fax: (508) 854-8484

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Friday, October 8, 2021, 8:00 a.m.

<https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/j/92978657296?pwd=S0k0WEFHek1qdEVPdjZRVUdPWWEJuZz09>

Meeting ID: 929 7865 7296 Passcode: 193024

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Education Committee Meeting Agenda

Friday, October 8, 2021, 8:00 a.m.

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Meeting ID: 929 7865 7296 **Passcode:** 193024

By phone: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) **Meeting ID:** 929 7865 7296

- I. Call to Order- Amy Vernon, Chair
- II. Attendance Recorded
- III. Review of the September 10, 2021, Meeting Minutes
 - a. **Motion:** To approve the September 10, 2021, Meeting Minutes.
- IV. MCAS Discussion- Curriculum Coordinators
- V. Literacy/Math Committees K-12- Heidi Paluk
- VI. Executive Director Goals- Amy Vernon
- VII. SEO Update- Dr. Caroline Cole
- VIII. Mission Discussion- Heidi Paluk
- IX. Principal Reports- Kelly Gould. Amy Puliafico, Christopher Kursonis
- X. Upcoming Education Committee Meeting(s)
 - a. Friday, November 12, 2021
 - b. Friday, December 10, 2021
- XI. Adjournment

APPROVED

10.04.21 10:03 am
City of Worcester, MA



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Education Committee Meeting Agenda- Digital Meeting

Friday, September 10, 2021, 8:00 a.m.

<https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/j/95177767178?pwd=SHF6UEdNYzN1cUgxZzlGMkhOWnZPZz09>

Meeting ID: 951 7776 7178 **Passcode:** 076302

By phone: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) **Meeting ID:** 951 7776 7178

- I. Call to Order- Amy Vernon, Chair
- II. Introductions/Attendance Recorded
- III. Review of the August 13, 2021, Meeting Minutes
 - a. **Motion:** To approve the August 13, 2021, Meeting Minutes.
- IV. IB Test/Audit for FY'22- Kelly Davila
- V. Enrollment Update- AnnMarie Little
- VI. ELL Summary of Access Testing- Amelie Cabral
- VII. SEO Update/Tool- Carrie Cole, Amelie Cabral
- VIII. Principal Reports- Kelly Gould, Amy Puliafico, Chris Kursonis
- IX. Upcoming Education Committee Meeting(s)
 - a. Friday, October 8, 2021
 - b. Friday, November 12, 2021
- X. Adjournment



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Education Committee Meeting Minutes-DRAFT

Friday, September 10, 2021, 8:00 a.m. DIGITAL MEETING

<https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/j/95177767178?pwd=SHF6UEdNYzN1cUgxZzlGMkhOWnZPZz09>

Meeting ID: 951 7776 7178

Passcode: 076302

By phone: +1 929 205 6099 US **Meeting ID:** 951 7776 7178

The meeting was called to order by Amy Veron at 8:02 a.m. The attendance was recorded as follows:

Board/Committee Members: Dr. Jie Park, Amy Vernon, Shelly Yarnie

Staff in attendance: Kelly Gould, Amy Puliafico, Chris Kusronis, AnnMarie Little, Dr. Caroline Cole, Amelie Cabral, Kelly Davila, Jenn Guisto, Heidi Paluk, Kristine Hersey

The Committee reviewed the Meeting Minutes from the August 13, 2021 meeting. Ms. Vernon asked for a motion to approve the August 13, 2021, Meeting Minutes. The motion was made by Ms. Yarnie, seconded by Ms. Vernon.

Ms. Vernon opened the floor for Ms. Kelly Davila and her presentation. Ms. Davila, Assistant Principal, and Director of the IB Programme stated that the IB cohort that graduated in 2021 had a successful year with all 6 students earning their IB Diplomas; a significant number of students in the class of 2021 also took 2 or 3 certificates classes. Ms. Davila explained that there are requirements the students must meet to achieve their diplomas. Ms. Davila stated that the student must take 6 subject courses: 3 Higher Levels (HL) and 3 Standard Levels (SL). The student must also have scored on a 1-7 scale which corresponds to the total weighted assessment points earned for that subject. Ms. Davila stated the remaining requirements included: approximately 4 weighted assessments in each subject area; complete a 4,000-word Extended Essay; complete Theory of Knowledge Course; and complete 2 years of volunteer hours and a 1-month CAS Project (Creativity, Activity, Service).

Ms. Davila also stated that students must score a total of 24 points out of a possible 45 points (7 points per subject, 3 "bonus" points for Theory of Knowledge and Extended Essay) to achieve a Diploma and that 12 of their points must be in HL courses (which averages 4 points in each HL) and they cannot score below a D in Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge. Ms. Davila explained that due to Covid, some changes were made and the May 2021 exams were modified with the following changes: All student Internal Assessments were submitted for external scoring; Teachers submitted Predicted Grades for each student/subject based on criteria provided by IB to individual schools (that criteria were calculated using historical grading patterns for the school); and all subject's exam requirements, except Mathematics, were modified by eliminating a paper or reducing the number of essay answers required. Ms. Davila stated that CAS requirements were also waived.

Ms. Davila stated that of the 116 subject exams taken, 114 scored a 3 or higher to earn an IB certificate. Ms. Davila stated that 98% earned an IB certificate and the average score was 4.44.



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Ms. Davila then explained that the 5-year IB Programme review will take place during the 2021-22 school year and that submission of Programme documentation is due March 15, 2022, for a preliminary review. Ms. Davila stated that due to the receipt of a Mifflin Memorial Fund Grant, all IB exam fees for the May 2022 session are paid at no cost to our IB seniors and their families. Ms. Davila thanked Mrs. Michelle Vigneux for her efforts in obtaining this grant.

Ms. Amelie Cabral provided an update on ACCESS testing. Ms. Cabral stated that ACCESS ran from Jan-May and there was no remote testing option. Ms. Cabral stated that 197 students had to complete the test in person and we had a 98% assessment rate; only 4 students did not complete it. Ms. Cabral stated that they were not able to reclassify K students as we had no prior information, but 27 students met the benchmark for reclassification. Ms. Cabral stated that there is now an expanded team of 9 people in the ESL department across all three schools. They are expanding the ESL curriculum as well as using a new platform (ELLevations) to track students' progress. Ms. Cabral stated that she was pleasantly surprised with the results of ACCESS and that 66% in grades 1-11 made progress; 5% remained the same, and those who had decreased were minimal (less than - 1%) and most decreases were in the writing domain.

Ms. AnnMarie Little then provided an update on enrollment. Ms. Little stated that 77 students withdrew from AKFCS last year and we have accepted 29 students off the waitlist. Ms. Little stated that most students are moving--either to an area town and/or out of state. Ms. Little stated that there are 9-10 new seats to fill by October 1, 2021. Of the students who withdrew, Ms. Little stated that 9th grade lost the most; 17 students. Ms. Little stated that last year, the enrollment policy was updated due to a mistake from 20 years ago which listed Holden but should have said Wachusett School District as part of the charter region. Ms. Little stated that an amendment must be submitted to DESE to include Wachusett as part of the AKFCS regional charter area. That amendment will need to be approved by the BESE (Board of Elementary and Secondary Education).

Dr. Carrie Cole shared that as the SEL framework is built across the district, she has been working with guidance staff, teachers, and other stakeholders (ABA's, BCBA's) to define the roles and responsibilities of each person. She is looking forward to using the assessment tool in mid-October to get a sense of where students (and staff) are with their mental health.

Ms. Cabral shared that she has been working with Dr. Cole on purchasing the Panorama platform that has an SEL and family engagement/cultural competency component. Panorama also has an MTSS module and although we are adopting MTSS across the district, we did not purchase that module yet as we have much work to do to lay the foundation.

Ms. Cabral stated that Panorama will help administer the SEL inventory tool to assess students 3 times per year on where they are socially and emotionally. This will help us evaluate if the interventions are working. The Panorama Tools are research-based and can help with identifying skills and competencies that are needed to help students as well as to help identify district (or school level) goals and implement strategies.

Questions included how often the survey will be administered (3x in fall, winter, spring) and how many questions will be asked (likely no more than 15). The questions can be selected from research-based questions depending on the overall goal of the program/department.

Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness and all students have equal access to the general education program and the full range of any occupational/vocational education programs offered by the district.



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The principals then provided an update. Ms. Kelly Gould informed everyone that the students are happy and respectful and have a feeling of excitement. She also explained that there is a new math program called Ready Math. Ms. Gould states that they are socially distancing as best as possible but the school did lose a floor due to recent flooding. Ms. Gould stated that they are maintaining flexibility and working with the students on keeping their masks on.

Ms. Puliafico then gave an update on the middle school, stating that the teachers and students were excited to be back. Ms. Pulifico stated that they were working on resetting routines and building procedures, especially for the 4th and 5th graders. Ms. Puliafico informed everyone there were minimal discipline issues so far this year. Ms. Puliafico stated that the heat in the building especially on hot days is an issue; we need to look at ways to mitigate this even as early as Spring. Ms. Puliafico also stated that academic screening would be done through iReady starting in the next two weeks.

Mr. Chris Kursonis provided an update for the high school. Mr. Kursonis stated that the students are happy being back to a routine. Mr. Kursonis stated that Grades 10-12 seamlessly transitioned to being back to school but Grades 8 and 9 have needed more assistance. Mr. Kursonis stated that there are a few student attendance issues as compared to when the students were remote learning.

Ms. Vernon called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Ms. Yarnie, seconded by Dr. Park and the meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

**MCAS Presentation
Education Committee
10/8/21**

Achievement Levels

ELA

GRADE	Meeting/ Exceeding	Partially Meeting	Not Meeting
3	45%	45%	10%
4	41%	45%	14%
5	32%	54%	14%
6	34%	39%	27%
7	29%	46%	24%
8	41%	52%	7%
10	74%	23%	3%

MATH

GRADE	Meeting/ Exceeding	Partially Meeting	Not Meeting
3	21%	49%	30%
4	7%	56%	37%
5	7%	54%	39%
6	18%	61%	21%
7	15%	58%	27%
8	27%	67%	6%
10	57%	38%	5%

ELA Average Score

GRADE	AVG SCORE 2019	AVG SCORE 2021	CHANGE
3	501.5	494.4	-7.1
4	502.1	493.6	-8.5
5	496.3	490.7	-5.6
6	496.4	488.7	-7.7
7	497.5	485.9	-11.6
8	502.7	497.5	-5.2
10	507.5	509.7	+2.2
3-8	499.4	491.8	-7.6

MATH Average Score

GRADE	AVG SCORE 2019	AVG SCORE 2021	CHANGE
3	493.4	479.6	-13.8
4	493.3	473.4	-19.9
5	492.0	474.5	-17.5
6	502.3	482.9	-19.4
7	493.7	480.9	-12.8
8	500.3	489.7	-10.6
10	505.2	501.2	-4
3-8	495.9	480.1	-15.8

ELA STUDENTS MOVING LEVELS (COHORT DATA)

GRADE	MEETING/ EXCEEDING STUDENTS 2019	MEETING/ EXCEEDING STUDENTS 2021	COHORT CHANGE	NOT MEETING STUDENTS 2019	NOT MEETING STUDENTS 2021	COHORT CHANGE
			NA			NA
			NA			NA
Current 5th Grade	63	37	-26	4	16	+12
Current 6th Grade	67	41	-26	7	32	+25
Current 7th Grade	54	33	-21	8	27	+19
Current 8th Grade	55	45	-10	11	8	-3
Current 10th Grade	59	70	+11	5	3	-2

MATH STUDENTS MOVING LEVELS (COHORT DATA)

GRADE	MEETING/ EXCEEDING STUDENTS 2019	MEETING/ EXCEEDING STUDENTS 2021	COHORT CHANGE	NOT MEETING STUDENTS 2019	NOT MEETING STUDENTS 2021	COHORT CHANGE
3			NA			NA
4			NA			NA
Current 5th Grade	35	8	-27	13	45	+32
Current 6th Grade	39	21	-18	12	25	+13
Current 7th Grade	39	17	-22	11	30	+19
Current 8th Grade	65	30	-35	2	7	+5
Current 10th Grade	58	54	-4	7	5	-2

* Deeper dive into individual student data is required. Growth percentiles, i-Ready data, MCAS history should be weighed to determine next steps.

Science Results

MATH

GRADE	Meeting/ Exceeding 2021	Meeting/ Exceeding 2019	Partially Meeting 2021	Partially Meeting 2019	Not Meeting 2021	Not Meeting 2019
5	24%	24%	52%	64%	25%	13%
8	32%	44%	58%	51%	10%	5%
9	69% (A/P)	90% (A/P)	25% (NI)	10%(NI)	5% (F)	0% (F)

Action Plan

High School

- Compare Fall i-Ready diagnostic to Spring MCAS data.
- Based on these data (along with progress reports)extra help sessions have been set up.
- IB students will be running extra help sessions. These sessions will focus on skills that students are weak in, as determined through i-Ready data.
- Curriculum meetings to determine how to incorporate past standards that students are weak in.
- Ongoing data analysis

Middle School

- Compare fall i-Ready diagnostic data to Spring MCAS data ----> Teachers are going to be using the MCAS in conjunction with the iReady data to guide their lessons and choose areas of focus throughout the year. These areas will be assessed regularly.
- WIN block (What I Need) purpose behind this block is for students who receive additional services to not miss academic classes. Additionally, students will receive remediation and extension by content area teachers during this time.
- Curriculum meetings to determine how to incorporate past standards that students are weak in, revisiting priority standards work from 2019.
- Ongoing data analysis
- Strengthening the resiliency, culture and expectations after 18 months of disrupted learning.
- Supporting students' social and emotional development though classroom based SEL activities.

Elementary School

- **Employ a multi-tiered system of supports in all areas of learning**
 - Increase teacher capacity and rigorous instruction in tier 1**
 - Identify students and provide interventions throughout the year in tier 2**
 - Identify and refer students in need of tier 3 supports**

Math

- **Compare Fall i-Ready diagnostic data to Spring MCAS data ----> Teachers are going to use MCAS data in conjunction with iReady data to guide lessons and choose areas of focus throughout the year. These areas will be assessed regularly.**
- **Implement ReadyMath curriculum in all grades**
- **Ongoing data analysis**

ELA

- **Integrate instruction and activities based on the science of reading in all reading blocks**
- **Utilize Heggerty oral phonology program in k-1**
- **Include explicit phonics instructions in all grades**
- **Ongoing data analysis (regularly assess students' progress in all components of reading)**
- **Continue focus on purpose for writing, increase text-based writing**

Current:

The mission of the Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is to assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children by providing a ~~classical~~ liberal arts education grounded in ~~the great works of Western Civilization~~ and aimed at academic excellence, ~~musical competence and character formation~~.

Reflective of IB:

The mission of the Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is to assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children by providing a liberal arts education grounded in works **representative of a diverse population, promoting lifelong learners with a global awareness**, and aimed at **developing responsible citizenship skills** and academic excellence.

History of the Mission Statement

The original Mission Statement was prepared by Advantage Schools and was used by all 16 schools under their management. This is the statement that appears in the charter and in the first three Annual Reports:

The mission of the Abby Kelley Foster Regional Charter School is to:

- Demonstrate the heights of academic achievement that public school students can routinely attain when the advantages of charter school governance are coupled with proven curricula and instructional practices and ambitious new academic standards
- Offer area families rich new choices in public education
- Create new professional settings for teachers that permit them to succeed, free from debilitating work rules, financial constraints, and excess regulation

After the break with Advantage, we petitioned the DOE to change the Mission Statement. The following was written by Michael Pakaluk and appears in the 2002 Annual Report:

The mission of the Abby Kelley Foster Regional Charter School is to attain the highest standards in teaching students to pursue the truth and to learn about the world; to love the good by growing in good character and civic virtues; and to cultivate what is beautiful in thought, word, action and sense. In this mission the school assists parents, who are the primary educators of their children; and it exercises stewardship by passing on to a new generation the treasures of knowledge and culture we have received from the past.

Both SchoolWorks, the group that coordinated our renewal site visit, members of the DOE charter school office, and a second site visit team, Foundations, criticized the Mission Statement. In their final report, SchoolWorks wrote: “The mission statement, as written, is too ambiguous for comment by the team. However, during the visit, stakeholders consistently expressed the mission as follows: to provide a “classical liberal arts education” that includes foreign language, music and academics; to develop well-behaved, respectful students; and to acknowledge and engage parents as their children’s primary educators. The school is faithful to the mission verbally expressed by the stakeholders as they work toward implementation.”

In response to this concern, the Mission Statement was simplified and will be submitted to the DOE for approval this fall. The newest version, written primarily by Jarrett Conner, reads:

The mission of the Abby Kelley Foster Regional Charter School is to assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children by providing a classical liberal arts education grounded in the great works of Western Civilization and aimed at academic excellence, musical competence and character formation.



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Education Committee Meeting Minutes-DRAFT

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Meeting ID: 929 7865 7296 **Passcode:** 193024

By phone: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) **Meeting ID:** 929 7865 7296

The meeting was called to order by Amy Vernon at 8:00 a.m. The attendance was recorded as follows:

Board/Committee Members: Amy Vernon, Dr. Jie Park,

Staff in attendance: Jessica Regan, Kristine Hersey, Rob Kerr, Kelly Davila, Heidi Paluk, Dr. Caroline Cole, Chris Kursonis, Amy Puliafico, Kelly Gould, Amelie Cabral, Jennifer Giusto

The Committee reviewed the Meeting Minutes from the September 10, 2021 meeting. Ms. Vernon asked for a motion to approve the September 10, 2021, Meeting Minutes. The motion was made by Dr. Park, seconded by Ms. Vernon.

The meeting began with the MCAS discussion with the Curriculum Coordinators. Mr. Kerr began with a presentation for the committee. Mr. Kerr began by stating that the state cautioned everyone against comparing against other schools. Mr. Kerr stated that while there were some differences, AKFCS followed the same path as many other schools in terms of scoring. Mr. Kerr stated that this information was to be used instead as a starting point to see where help is needed and changes can be made as last year was like no other and students lost many things during the pandemic year.

Mr. Kerr explained that with the shift with MCAS over the last years to Next Generation, they got away from the Advanced, Proficient, & Needs Improvement and in Failing as categories. Mr. Kerr explained that this MCAS data can help determine if online programming was successful and if so, whether it was only successful in certain grades or all grades overall if the students would need this program again.

Mr. Kerr explained that we have identified Math as a problem area across the district. Mr. Kerr stated that 500 is the standard score and that 2019 was one of AKFCS's best years so seeing some of these decreases this time around is certainly alarming. Mr. Kerr stated that a chart was created with the 8th-grade students' MCAS data from when they were in Seventh grade and compared it to their iReady scores and some correlation can be seen.



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Mr. Kerr stated that Math is going to be the real focus this year and will be for the next couple of years across the district. Mr. Kerr then provided the MCAS science results and explained that the test for the 9th graders is different because the grading scale has not been changed and they are still using the Advanced, Proficient, Needs Improvement, & Failing score. Mr. Kerr explained that there were some students that did not pass in 10th grade ELA and Math, but the score was high enough in ELA that a retake is not needed but there are four students that must retake the test this November. Mr. Kerr explained that 55 students (Seniors) have signed up for the test for scholarship purposes although they were exempt from it and did not need to take it to graduate.

Mr. Kerr stated that in high school, they have already compared the Fall iReady diagnostic results and the Spring MCAS data and they are now breaking up into groups. Mr. Kerr explained that iReady identifies standards and areas that students struggle in. Mr. Kerr also stated that they are in the process of looking through the other standards across the district that have been historically missed. Mr. Kerr explained that grades 3 through 8 took the test in English, Math, and Science, and only half of the test was given so the data is incomplete. That is the reason domains and standards were not released for those grades.

Mr. Kerr stated that based on the scores received, they have set up extra help sessions with the 8th-grade teachers as their math scores and skills are low. Mr. Kerr stated that the IB students have come forward offering to set up tutoring and mentoring sessions for the eighth-grade students. The students will be meeting one to two times a week in the cafeteria and working in small groups. Mr. Kerr stated the District is convening a math committee which will be a one-to-two-year process of aligning our curriculum for K to 12.

Ms. Regan explained that they were also going to be looking at the data from iReady and MCAS test data and determine the trends that are being seen. Ms. Regan stated that teachers were also going to be working with iReady and MCAS together to see what needs to be revised for lessons and instructions to meet the needs of the students, which will lead to restructuring the unit plans and the overall pacing to accelerate learning in areas identified as a high and moderate need. Ms. Regan explained that they would also be focusing on the students' unique needs which we may not have seen in the past.

Ms. Regan explained that this year in Middle School, they are implementing a block of time canned WIN (What I Need). Ms. Regan explained that during that time, various interventions would be going on that would be provided by content area teachers in addition to specialists such as Special Education teachers, Reading Specialist teachers, Interventionists, and EL Teachers. Ms. Regan stated that they are also going to be looking at Tier 2 and Tier 3 flexible interventions which would be cycled in and out and quick and can be considered a mini-lesson.

Ms. Regan explained that phonics is also a great need that was a noticeable trend in the current fourth-grade students that was not seen in previous years and is also showing up in the fifth grade as well. Ms. Regan explained that there will be curriculum meetings to look at past standards and focus on the priority standards work that was done in 2019. Ms. Regan stated that since there have been several new staff joining us in the past 2 years, they were not part of the work. Ms. Regan explained that the data analysis would not just be done three times a year that iReady is given and on MCAS scores. Ms.



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Regan explained that they would be doing formative and informative assessments throughout the year based on what the students are learning now.

Ms. Regan stated that they also see a need for a social-emotional component based on actions that the students are exhibiting now. Ms. Regan explained that many students spent the last 18 months (about 1 and a half years) isolated and now need to be taught soft skills involving student discourse, how to work together, how to plan together, how to think together, and how to together. Ms. Regan explained that eventually, they were looking at having social-emotional learning become a component of the "What I need" block which is for students who are requiring time with guidance. Ms. Regan stated that adjustment counselors would also be incorporated into that as well along with small social groups for the students. Ms. Regan explained that if students' social-emotional needs are not met, they are not going to be successful in learning because they will not be ready to learn.

Ms. Regan stated that they did begin a new math program in January of 2020 but that was cut short especially in person. Ms. Regan also stated that they were also looking at shared ownership with history and science teachers and having them take on a part of the literacy standards as well and make them relevant to their curriculum. Ms. Regan explained that a trend that was noticed in the middle school was the constructed responses to the students' writing skills across the board so now everyone will have shared ownership in writing throughout the building. Ms. Regan stated that this can no longer be just the responsibility of the math and ELA teachers and is now a team effort.

Ms. Hersey explained that just as the middle and high schools have shown, the elementary school also had big deficits this year. Ms. Hersey stated that most grade levels have many of the students testing about a grade below in their diagnostic testing and in reading and math that they have done so far this year. Ms. Hersey explained that they do find that in every classroom, in every grade there is a core group of students whose skills are about one year behind, which is a result of the disruption the pandemic caused. Ms. Hersey stated that they have a clear understanding that the foundational skills that the students need for them to move into fourth grade ready to learn as readers and have number sense and number operational skills as well. Ms. Hersey also stated that they are moving from an RTI to a multi-tiered system of support in all areas of learning.

Ms. Hersey stated that they have gone through the first round of diagnostic testing and MTSS meetings and groups are being formed to address needs in phonics and phonemic awareness along with vocabulary and comprehension along with math and other areas such as OT and SEL. Ms. Hersey explained that they are doing a whole child and whole-school approach which means getting each student what they need in their classrooms and in small group support as well. Ms. Hersey stated that they are also making sure that they are identifying students that may need Tier 3 support.

Ms. Hersey stated that overall, there has been a connection between the iReady results that they are getting this fall and what the grades were in the spring so that can give us confidence that there's strong correspondence and alignment between iReady and the kinds of assessment that the students will see in the Spring. Ms. Hersey explained that they have implemented tests and grades K-3 will be using this as it is conceptually based and uses a lot of manipulatives, a lot of turning, and building on math discourse. Ms. Hersey stated that the students are learning the routines that go along with Ready Math



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and weekly, the lessons are broken down into sections. Ms. Hersey stated that each lesson can go up to 6 days and the students have weekly lesson assessments which is an effective way for the students to keep up with the skills.

Ms. Hersey explained that this program allows for them to do some backfilling if needed but also use an accelerated learning approach so that rather than the student remediating all the way back to the previous grade level, they a look at the grade-level standard that is being taught and what can be done to provide the students with the central skills that they need to work on grade-level material.

Ms. Hersey stated that they will be looking at all the data to pinpoint where the students need the most assistance and focus on those skills. Ms. Vernon agreed with the Curriculum coordinators and their action plans and asked if anyone had any questions. Dr. Park also wanted to know how what they are proposing in the action plan is different from balanced literacy, which science bears out for the last 20 years is as the gold standard for reading instruction instead of an explicitly phonics-based approach.

Ms. Gould explained that there was a balanced literacy program in place for years and that they balanced that with interactive reading aloud, independent reading, writing about reading, and writing for several aspects' audiences. Ms. Gould explained that there were missing components to this and that there was a strong focus on guided reading but the students need more. They are looking to bring in some more high-quality instructional materials that are not based on a student's reading level.

Dr. Park suggested with the science of reading, (when students move from learning to read to reading to learn), phonics-based instruction does not serve students very well, especially at the middle and high school level. Ms. Gould explained that the students should be exposed to grade-level content, comprehension fluency, and writing about reading as well as phonics in the early MS grades. Ms. Vernon then asked if the new Heggerty program has assessments at that detailed level for the students to which Ms. Gould said yes.

Some teachers are already using the phonemic assessments that go along with the Heggerty program in the classrooms, but it is not yet a school-wide practice this year.

Ms. Vernon wanted to know if each grade level has something in place to assess what the difficulties are in the students and if the additional staff was requested. Staff replied that yes there are teams. For example, Ms. Regan stated that there is a reading specialist and a reading interventionist analyzing what the students need and staff is being allocated as appropriate. Mr. Kerr stated that in high school, there is a Special Education teacher in 2 of the level 3 eighth-grade math classes and an aide in the other one left and they are taking an all-hands-on-deck approach.

Ms. Vernon asked if any of the non-special education teachers are getting any additional professional development or support to be able to handle these interventions issues that they may not have experienced at this level before. Mr. Kerr stated that as far as professional development is concerned, it is not something they have yet implemented. Mr. Kerr stated that they are working together with the eighth-grade teachers to really break down the data and use iReady data more than they have in the past. Mr. Kerr stated that they would use the remediation information that comes with the iReady data to try and identify and fix the problems that arise while teaching the eighth-grade standards. Ms.



Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School

10 New Bond Street Worcester, MA 01606

Phone: (508) 854-8400 Fax: (508) 854-8484

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Vernon then wanted to know if the state has provided any guidance for us on how to teach grade-level content and remediate simultaneously to which it was told that they suggested learning acceleration versus remediation. Ms. Vernon was told that there is a Learning acceleration document through DESE that has different learning pathways that can be taken as an entire school along with its individual classes and individual students that was released recently and that is the gold star standard they are recommending.

Ms. Vernon asked if anyone else had follow-up questions and there were none. Ms. Vernon suggested presenting this data to the full Board because even though the comparison of this year is not as useful as it would have been, some context would be good considering the large drops. Ms. Vernon stated that there was a drop in scores everywhere across the state, but we can use the data to show how our numbers compared to the state numbers on average.

Ms. Vernon then opened the floor for Ms. Paluk to present. Ms. Paluk began by stating that there is a lot of work that must be done but even prior to that, there was not a lot of intentional alignment from Grade K through twelve in both literacy and math. Ms. Paluk explained that while it is appropriate to have different curriculums for different grade levels, an integrated approach needs to be taken on both academic areas based on historical numbers and the data presented this morning. Ms. Paluk stated that the topic of putting together a district-wide math and literacy committee was spoken of in the spring and that there is some more internal work and internal meaning with just the curriculum coordinators and herself, that must be done first before so the committee is tasked with specific goals.

Dr. Park asked what deliverables were being anticipated. Mr. Kerr explained that the first step was going to be identifying historical data and what the missing standards are so that they can back and evaluate but part of what the small group will do is determine the scope and purpose of the committee. Ms. Hersey added to Mr. Kerr's statement by saying that they spoke about identifying the strongest math thinkers and teachers that are enthusiastic about math and teachers who have influence in the buildings who can really be early adopters of instructional practices and driving change.

Ms. Vernon then moved on to the Executive Director goals. Ms. Vernon stated that one of the roles that the Board plays in monitoring continuous products at the school is to work with the Executive Director to identify roles that are in priority areas that the school intends to focus on throughout the year.

Ms. Paluk explained that students that are two grade levels behind and working in that group will make see at least 80% of growth. Ms. Vernon also explained that the other goal that was being looked at was actively producing a measure and structure for social-emotional success across all grades. This will be as opposed to an outcomes-related goal.

Ms. Vernon moved on to Dr. Cole and the SEL update. Dr. Cole stated that they were on the path to integrating Panorama with Rediker and that they were at the point where they could get into the surveys, look at all the questions, and develop a survey. Dr. Cole explained that the survey from grades K-2 would be a teacher perception survey and then grades 3-5 and 6-12 would be completed by students. Dr. Cole stated that the topics of focus this year are going to be growth mindset, behavioral and emotional regulation, belonging, and a sense of connection so.



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Dr. Cole explained they are hoping to survey all the students by the end of October.

Dr. Cole stated that once that is set up, the next goal is to survey the teachers and see where they are and what support they may need moving forward and the goal is to have this up and running by the end of October. Ms. Vernon asked if anyone had any additional questions and there were none.

Ms. Vernon then moved on to the mission discussion topic and turned the floor over to Ms. Paluk. Ms. Paluk explained that we are on our 5-year review for IB, and it was mentioned five years ago that our mission did not really fit an IB school, and they made a recommendation at the time that we look at incorporating more IB language into this, but it was not an issue that was taken care of at the time. Ms. Paluk explained that when DESE came in the spring, many of the questions that came from the DESE focus group were around the mission statement and what does it look like for western civilization. Ms. Paluk explained that since there was a charter renewal coming up and the application is due over the summer, now would be a suitable time to look at our mission.

Ms. Paluk stated that there were conversations to be had internally about how big a change is going to be made. Mr. Kerr stated that coming with a standard sufficient statement and then having everybody finalize it is more suitable. Ms. Paluk agreed and stated that the main thing that has been to be thought about is how much buy-in is needed and thought the mission statement would have to be thoughtful and inclusive. Ms. Vernon explained that the mission statement should provide some insight into why we are a charter school and what do we do that is different. Ms. Vernon suggested a survey to ask people what are a couple of words/statements that they would like to see in the mission statement.

The idea of a zoom meeting where people can openly talk was suggested as a way for everyone to be able to join without barriers to which Ms. Vernon and Ms. Paluk agreed. Ms. Vernon then moved on to the principal reports. Mr. Kursonis began and explained that they were in the process of getting back to normal with athletic events and getting ready for the school play, Macbeth. Mr. Kursonis also explained that it is spirit week at the school and the students are enjoying themselves. Mr. Kursonis also stated that they have enabled some 9th-grade groups in terms of that transition and looking back to when they were last in school, what grades they were in, what the expectations were behaviorally and academically, and where that goes along with where they are missing or falling short.

Mr. Kursonis explained that they have been able to address a lot of these things through the eighth-grade team of teachers that solely teach eighth grade. Mr. Kursonis also explained that many of the ninth-grade teachers also only teach that grade level, so they can zero in on these issues and it has shown to be successful when looking at the 10-12th graders. Mr. Kursonis stated that progress reports are not something they look at comparatively. Mr. Kursonis stated that as students are getting adjusted, especially in the first quarter, the numbers, especially in the eighth grade, will be high. Mr. Kursonis stated that the numbers are not different or alarming in terms of where we are and that if we look at where we are right now in progress reports with the percentages of how many students are below 70, it is in the 20s.

Ms. Puliafico provided an update on the middle school. Ms. Puliafico explained that they just finished the mid-quarter and that progress reports went out on Wednesday to families. The beginning of



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the year was spent building relationships and trust with the students and getting them back into the classroom, which is important.

Ms. Puliafico explained that out of 475 students in the middle school, 14 % (65 students) had at least one grade under 70 and that 20% (13) of those students had two or more grades under 70.

Ms. Puliafico explained that the teachers are holding extra help sessions after school as well as using WIN blocks to start filling some of those gaps and helping students catch up with work. Ms. Puliafico explained that work completion is always a struggle for students, especially when they are still working on their organizational skills and having to come back to school. Ms. Puliafico stated that they are also using WIN time for the students who are in need of higher interventions and that there are about 15%-20% of students in each grade in a higher-level intervention class, with reading being up and running now. Ms. Puliafico also stated that they held back to school night which was held as a “Know your child” night and this allowed for the teachers to have one-on-one conferences with families to find out about their students, what last year was like for them and what are the goals for their students and building those relationships at the beginning of the year.

Ms. Puliafico explained that they have also had their character virtues read aloud school-wide and that each grade has a different book which they read around responsibility and do activities as well as the character virtue celebration. Ms. Puliafico explained that this round was held in person for students and virtually for parents and it will continue to be virtual for parents.

Ms. Puliafico explained that clubs began in middle school and nine different clubs are being offered now. Ms. Puliafico stated that the middle school had their summer reading celebration where students had a choice book and were able to do book clubs with a pizza lunch. Next, Ms. Puliafico stated that they would be administering the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey in conjunction with DESE and they are participating in the statewide results where they test one class in each grade and they are also including grades six and seven and get the data back sometime late in the year. Ms. Puliafico stated that on October 18 and 19, WPI’s math and science academy would be facilitating STEM week activities across the school and there will be about 15 teams of students coming in to run hour-long sessions with every class and grade. Ms. Puliafico also stated that the musical ensemble had begun, the first rental night was held, and 150 students signed up to take part in that.

Ms. Gould provided an update on the elementary school. Ms. Gould stated that they started the school year with a bit of urgency and tried to get the MTSS process started right away. Ms. Gould stated that they decided not to do first-trimester progress reports so that they can have a much better picture at the November conference. Ms. Gould stated that they compared the iReady scores from this year to last year and the first-grade scores are not as heavy as the second and third graders. Ms. Gould stated that they held their first round of diagnostic meetings, and it is a process, but the teachers are an integral part of this as they have brought forward students that they have identified as possibly needing interventions.

Ms. Gould stated that from there, the intervention team looks at each student and determines what needs are brought met during Tier 1 instruction and what changes or amendments or embedded practices need to be added to the Tier 1 instruction. Ms. Gould stated that they would also be looking at Tier 2 and 3 interventions and recommendations for reading and small group math classrooms and some



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will be done with interventionists. Ms. Gould stated that there are progress monitoring tools for each of the groups and that they will be looking at that closely to make sure the students are making progress. Ms. Gould stated that Ms. Hersey has been meeting with each grade level and grade level team meeting and there is also a new math program this year. Ms. Gould explained that they have also added 60 minutes in different grade levels to their targeted reading instruction block because teachers expressed the need to have more time to go over these lessons and instructions.

Ms. Gould stated that she is trying to bring in more high-quality instructional materials that these highly qualified teachers can use from instruction, so they have Ready Math this year and are looking at adding more materials for ELA once the teacher capacity goes up.

Ms. Vernon thanked everyone for their information today and asked if anyone had comments, to which no one replied.

Ms. Vernon called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Dr. Park and seconded by Ms. Vernon. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.

List of Documents Provided:

MCAS Presentation Data
Mission Discussion
Presentation